PATTERNS OF POWER · TOKUGAWA JAPAN

Tokugawa Japan

The Complete Study · 1600 — 1615 — 1868 · A landscape and twelve modules on an armed settlement that ended a century of war, fixed a country in place to keep the peace cheap, and was dismantled at last by the sons of the class that ran it

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with Claude (Anthropic) · 2026

held as tested, not revealed

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Preface and Outline

Front matter · how this study was made, the discipline it holds to, and a map of its thirteen parts

The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series, applying the series' framework to the Tokugawa settlement of Japan — from the field at Sekigahara in 1600, through the legislation of 1615 that made a personal ascendancy into an institution, to the surrender of the shogunal commission in 1867 and the dismantling of the warrior class by its own sons in 1876. The framework is a lens for reading how any order of power is founded, dressed, and held: the floor of force beneath every order, the robe of doctrine laid over the floor to make the force cheap, the settlement that divides the spoils, the cost column in which each subject prices defection, the default by which an elite coordinates and survives the loss of any one man, and — running through all of it — position logic, the proposition that rulers in like positions converge on like solutions because a position poses a problem with only a few good answers.

Japan was chosen because it is the framework's cleanest case of consolidation rather than conquest. There is no metropole here, no sea to hide anything across, no distant public whose belief funds the operation, and no race line: the men who won and the men who lost spoke one language, wrote one script, buried their dead by one rite, and had in many cases fought beside each other within living memory. Every previous case in the collection derived much of its yield from measuring a distance between two worlds and watching an order spend its ingenuity keeping the two ends apart. Strip the distance away and what remains is the mechanism itself, running in one room — and one question the colonial studies could only approach: what a settlement does when it must hold an armed elite that it cannot expel, cannot examine, cannot export, and dare not disarm.

The study was built the way the series is built, one module at a time. The author brought the framework, the direction, the judgement of the whole, and held the collaboration to its disciplines; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research — verifying every load-bearing quotation, date, and figure by search against a source reproducing the primary text before any module was written — and produced the drafts, each presented and confirmed before the next was begun. Its spine was corrected once, early and decisively, by the author: an initial draft of the landscape had read the

Kaga rising of 1487 as a possible case of popular authorship, when the evidence already gathered — the disaffected vassal families, the installation of the dead governor's own uncle in his place, and the presence in every account of the *jizamurai*, who were legally samurai and not peasants — settled it the other way. The error was not a missing fact but the sentimental reading of facts already in hand, which is the failure this collection is most exposed to and least likely to notice. The correction is carried through to the last module, and it produced a diagnostic the framework did not have.

The discipline

Public-domain primary sources — laws, decrees, edicts, testaments, and the wording of the codes themselves — are quoted exactly, in the original with translation, at the length the argument needs, because in a legal fiction the precise wording is the evidence; modern copyrighted scholarship is paraphrased, briefly, and credited. No quotation, date, attribution, or figure is invented or reconstructed from memory: what cannot be verified is dropped or flagged, and contested figures are given as ranges. Where a load-bearing point rests on a single scholar's reconstruction, on a popular source, or on this study's own inference rather than a reported finding, the note on sources at the end of each module says so plainly, and several such flags are raised. The engine throughout is the method of information asymmetry — the exact public words set beside the exact working words, the arithmetic laid out and the sum left to the reader. Suffering is held with gravity, and the study refuses both flattery and demonisation, naming the legal fiction as fiction and explaining the order's logic without excusing it; its watchword is *legibility is not pardon*. Every module returns a refinement to the framework, stated plainly in its closing section. And the pattern is held as tested, not revealed — a lens laid over the record, a tendency and never a law.

What this study added to the framework

Because it is the pattern with the distance removed, the study could name features the colonial cases could not. Chief among them: that a licence can manufacture defenders as effectively as ownership, so that the default a settlement generates is proportional not to the security of the title but to the gap between the title and the holder's realistic alternative; that a settlement may convert possession not into property but into *office*, re-issuing the whole country's holdings periodically so that the re-issue becomes the title, which is a fourth family of settlement fiction and whose diagnostic tell is the mass reconfirmation of holdings nobody is challenging; that an order may answer the open problem by dividing the payoff rather than dividing power — paying

capability in office without estate and loyalty in estate without office, and never one man in both; that the medium-of-payment test should be run on the recipient of a tax as well as on the payer, because an order that taxes in a commodity and spends in money has built a conversion point it does not own; that a ruling class can be the collector of a surplus without being its destination, so a study should follow the take one stage past the apex; that a chronic disciplinary burden imposed on a subordinate elite acts as a selection pressure and may leave the disciplined more competent than the disciplinarian; that an apex can open its own fracture, voluntarily, by asking for advice it has never asked for before; that an order can be exhausted by contact rather than by combat, the diagnostic being the currency clause of a treaty; that the metabolic debt of an intensive agriculture can be paid in advance and invisibly, in fertility rather than in famine, under an order that never breaks; that a counter-lever can be found rather than granted, by a group with organisational capacity and no patron, in a contradiction between two things the apex itself wants; and that where an order counts everything, the worst of the accounting will be found in the territory it has arranged not to count.

The arc

A landscape opening and twelve modules, each with a framework function and its own evocative title.

Landscape — the field before the settlement. The Corpse They Could Not Afford to Bury. A century in which the floor of force broke into a hundred private floors; a sacral apex too poor to bury its own dead and still the only source of a title worth having, because its warrant had been drafted eight centuries earlier without a revocation clause; and the two builds one man watched fail before his own turn came.

1 — The Floor of Force. In Order, Do Not Forget Disorder. The founding read as one continuous operation from Sekigahara to the ash of Osaka and the demolition orders of the following weeks, dated not by the battle but by the completion of transferability; and the discovery that the medieval defect lies not in the armed-service clause but in the combinability of the retinues.

2 — The Settlement. Confirmed at the Joint. A country whose entire landholding was reissued as eighteen hundred and thirty documents in a single operation, and a title that had to be granted again at every succession because it was never quite given in the first place.

3 — The Robe. The God Who Had Already Lost. The itemised bill a man paid for legitimacy he did not need — a title rented from a bankrupt throne, a divine name chosen by checking whose god had just failed, a shrine that consumed a fifth of an inheritance — and what each entry reveals about the audience he thought he had.

4 — Formation. The Law Nobody Issued. How the most quoted instrument of peasant instruction in Japanese history turns out to have no original and no author, how the most totalising institution the order ever operated was never ordered into existence, and what filled the portrait the merchants were never given.

5 — The Cost Column. Not to Be Seen by Any but the Magistrates. A penal code kept secret while its punishments were displayed on boards, three hundred officers for the largest city on earth, a tax assessed on the village and then never measured again, and a door bolted against the wrong people.

6 — Extraction. Rice Not Yet Harvested. A tax taken in kind from villages, converted into bills covering grain not yet shipped and grain not yet grown, traded in the world's first licensed futures exchange, and arriving at last in the storehouses of the men the order had ranked last.

7 — Information and Suppression. The Leaf Torn Out. A censorship bureau that blacked out the words or removed the whole page, a censorship of books sold to a guild in exchange for a copyright, a classified foreign newsletter delivered to the shogun alone, and a national policy that acquired its name and its existence from a translation made in 1801.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. The Man Who Moved to a Poorer Province. An order that paid capability in office and loyalty in land and took great care never to pay one man in both; and the discovery that the device designed to keep the outer lords weak was what eventually forced two of them to build the only competent governments in Japan.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. One Thousand and Seven Villages. An order with no assembly, no charter and no free press, in which a thousand villages nevertheless combined and destroyed a monopoly the shogunate itself had chartered; where that lever came from, and why the only route into the ruling class had a published price.

10 — Change and Collapse. Eight Hundred Opinions. How an order that could not be overthrown from below was opened from above by its own government, asking two hundred lords and its own retainers what it ought to do; and how a floor that had not been tested since 1638 turned out, when tested with a fifteen-to-one advantage, not to be there.

11 — The Grim Accounting. They Could Not Taste the Sugar. What the two and a half centuries cost, in the sword and in the metabolic note: an order whose founding violence was modest, whose largest single atrocity was kept off its own books, and whose demographic debt was paid not in famine but in children who were never born.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. The Class That Abolished Itself. Where the order meets the pattern and where it stands apart, closing on the strongest case its defenders can make, answered without flinching: that the peace was real, and that the peace and the immobility were not two things to be weighed against each other but one thing seen twice.

The Corpse They Could Not Afford to Bury

Landscape · the field before the settlement — a century in which the floor of force had broken into a hundred private floors, a sacral apex too poor to bury its own dead and still the only source of a title worth having, and the two builds one man watched fail before his own turn came

Every previous case in this collection has opened on two societies with a distance between them — a metropole and a colony, a fleet and a shore, a creed arriving from outside and a creed already in place — and the whole analytical yield came from measuring that distance and then watching an order spend its ingenuity keeping the two ends from meeting. Japan in 1600 offers no such gap. The men who won and the men who lost spoke one language, wrote in one script, counted by one calendar, buried their dead by one rite, and had in many cases fought beside each other within living memory. There is no sea to hide anything across and no home public whose belief must be managed at a remove. What there is instead is a single armed society that had spent five generations discovering it could not stop killing itself, and one man standing at the top of it in the autumn of 1600 with the problem of what to do next.

So the landscape's task changes shape. It is not to set two worlds side by side; it is to reconstruct, as exactly as the record allows, the position Tokugawa Ieyasu actually occupied — what pressures bore on him, what materials lay within his reach, and, before either of those, what his vantage had shown him and what it had never once put in front of him. Everything the Tokugawa order became was somebody solving the problem in front of him with what he had; nobody designed it, and nobody could have, because the problems arrived in sequence and each solution manufactured the next. The founding problem, the one the whole apparatus grew out of, can be put in a single sentence, and it is worth putting bluntly because the order's own later account of itself will dress it in the language of harmony and heaven: several hundred armed houses, each with castles, revenues, and sworn retainers of its own, had just watched a coalition assemble against a dead ruler's child and take the realm from him in eighteen months. How does the man who did that stop it being done to his son?

Three builds already standing

The first discipline this collection imposes is to refuse the fiction of an aboriginal baseline. A conqueror never meets a timeless order; he meets an earlier conquest that has been naturalised until it feels like the grain of the world. Japan bends the rule in an instructive direction, because Ieyasu did not meet one naturalised former build but a stack of them, and — this is the part that matters — every previous winner had left the one above him standing.

The lowest and oldest layer was a wholesale foreign import. Across the seventh and eighth centuries the Yamato court reorganised itself on the template of Tang China, culminating in the code promulgated in 701, which was modelled on the codes of the Chinese Tang dynasty and provided for central administrative organs, provinces ruled by governors appointed from the centre, districts under locally selected officials, and townships of fifty households under headmen. This was a state built out of another state's parts, and its architects made two deliberate departures from the model they were copying. Government position and class status were fixed by birth rather than by merit, as Chinese practice had it; and the Japanese rejected the Chinese concept of the Mandate of Heaven, asserting that the emperor's power came from his imperial descent, not from his righteousness or fairness as a ruler.

Read the second of those clauses slowly, because eight centuries of Japanese politics run out of it. A mandate that can be forfeited is a mandate a rival can claim has been forfeited; the whole Chinese repertoire of dynastic replacement depends on that hinge. Grounding the emperor's warrant in descent alone removes the hinge. It buys the throne a permanent immunity from delegitimation and pays for it with a permanent incapacity: nobody can ever depose the emperor for misrule, and equally nobody can ever *become* him. An apex of that construction cannot be replaced. It can only be bypassed — which is exactly what everybody thereafter did, and precisely why it was still there in 1600.

The second layer was the warrior government. When Minamoto no Yoritomo won the civil wars of the 1180s he did not take the throne or abolish the court; he had a parallel apparatus sanctioned — constables and stewards planted in the provinces and on the estates — and ran the country's revenue and command through it while leaving the old machine in Kyoto to go on issuing ranks and offices. The third layer was the Ashikaga, who established their own warrior government in Kyoto in 1338, after the fall of the Kamakura shogunate and Emperor Go-Daigo's failed attempt to restore direct imperial rule, and who likewise kept the court above them and the provincial military governors below.

Three builds, then, each laid over the last without clearing it, and each acquiring over generations the quality that makes a built thing dangerous to reason about: it stopped feeling built. A fifteenth-century Japanese did not experience the emperor as an eighth-century design decision or the shogunate as a twelfth-century administrative innovation. He experienced both as the furniture of the world. That their origins were manufactured does not make the belief in them a trick; it makes them things that were made and then became real, which is a stronger and more durable condition than any lie could sustain. Naming the manufacture is not debunking it. It is the only way to see what Ieyasu was actually holding when he reached for it.

The century in which the floor came apart

The Ashikaga arrangement failed in the ordinary way — a house that has delegated its coercive capacity discovers that the delegates now hold it. From its beginnings the Ashikaga system of political control was unable to match the authority held by the previous Kamakura shoguns; unable to control affairs away from their power base in Kyoto, successive generations of shoguns delegated an increasing number of responsibilities to their regional vassals, the shugo daimyō. In 1467 a succession dispute inside the shogunal house itself lit the accumulated material. By that year the Ashikaga dynasty had grown so weak that the dispute provided the trigger for the collapse of central authority, and the ensuing civil war, fought from 1467 to 1477 largely within the imperial capital, was the precursor of the Age of Warring States.

What happened structurally in those ten years is stated with unusual precision in the standard accounts, and it is the sentence this whole study rests on: power no longer resided with agents of the shogunate, or in obligations owed to the shogun; authority now depended upon steadfast vassals, securely held lands, fortifications such as castles, tactical acumen, and military skills. That is a floor of force decomposing. The capacity to make organised violence had not diminished — it had, if anything, grown — but it had ceased to pool at one point and had re-pooled at a hundred, each pool self-sufficient, each answerable to nobody. The old military governors were displaced or replaced by their own deputies and retainers, and the process ran all the way down in Kyoto itself: real power passed into the hands of the chief administrators of the Hosokawa house from 1490 to 1558, then in the sixteenth century devolved to their retainers the Miyoshi from 1558 to 1565, and was finally usurped by the Miyoshi's own retainers the Matsunaga from 1565 to 1568. Three usurpations in eighty years, each by the man immediately below, is not a decline in authority. It is a rule about what happens to authority when nothing above it can punish its seizure.

The lords who emerged from this legislated for themselves. Each substantial house issued its own code for its own province, and the mere existence of such codes is the admission: a law that stops at a provincial border is a confession that no law runs above it. And the disorder did not confine itself to the warrior class. Leagues — *ikki*, the word covering everything from a debt-relief riot to a standing provincial confederacy — became a normal instrument of politics. In Yamashiro a confederation of local warriors and village councils governed the province from 1485 until it submitted to the Ashikaga shogunate in 1493. And in Kaga something happened that has been miscategorised for so long, and so attractively, that getting it right is worth a section of its own.

In 1487 the provincial governor Togashi Masachika left on campaign; between one hundred and two hundred thousand adherents of the Ikkō-ikki revolted, and when he returned with his army they overwhelmed it and surrounded him in his palace, where he committed seppuku. The province was then held, in one form or another, by a confederacy organised through the True Pure Land temple network for the better part of ninety years, and it is remembered as the Peasants' Kingdom — a phrase that has to be dismantled before anything true can be said about it.

Start with the military arithmetic, because it disposes of the romantic reading on its own. Cultivators with farm implements and improvised spears do not defeat a body of mounted, armoured, trained professionals; where a record appears to show that they did, the correct response is not wonder but a search for the layer the record has flattened out. In Sengoku Japan that layer has a name. The *jizamurai* — literally the samurai of the land — were formally classified as members of the samurai class from the Muromachi period onward, holding hereditary small rural domains, with martial training and obligations to bear arms; their status marked by the right to carry the paired swords, to use a family crest, and to claim exemption from the corvée labour imposed on commoners, but unlike the urban warriors vassalised directly to a powerful daimyō, they retained autonomy over their own land. They were not aristocrats and they were not peasants. They were a numerous, armed, locally rooted warrior stratum that owned the ground it stood on and answered to nobody in particular — and they were the fighting edge of every effective league of the period. The cultivators supplied numbers, food and cover; the temple network supplied the coordination, the communications and the cross-village alliance a purely local rising could never have built; the jizamurai supplied the weapons, the tactical cohesion and the men who knew how to use both.

Then look at what the rebels actually did with their victory, which is the detail that settles the matter. They were backed by several disaffected vassal families and nobility,

and when Masachika was dead the former vassals of Masachika granted the position of shugo to Masachika's uncle Yasutaka. They installed another Togashi. The office of governor was not abolished in 1488; it survived, occupied by a member of the same house, and only disappeared decades later after a further round of fighting inside the movement itself. What happened in Kaga in 1487 was therefore a coalition of the governor's own disaffected vassals and the armed village warriors of his province replacing him with a more agreeable member of his own family, with a religious network supplying the organisation and an enormous body of believing cultivators supplying the mass. That is a factional substitution at the elite level, dressed — genuinely, not cynically — in a creed that its participants held to be true. It is not the ruled rising and taking the state.

The phrase the episode is remembered by deserves its exact wording, because the exactness cuts the same way. The Hongan-ji cleric Jitsugo, writing of the years after the governor's death, recorded that since the Togashi had been set up from below, 「百姓等ノウチツヨク成テ、近年ハ百姓ノ持タル國ノヤウニナリ行キ候」 — "those below grew strong among themselves, and in recent years it has come to be *like* a province held by the commoners." The famous slogan, "a province held by the peasants," is a modern truncation of that line produced by deleting the words that say *like* and *has come to be*. The man who was there hedged; his hedge has been edited out; and the word he used covers, without distinguishing them, both the cultivator and the sword-bearing village landholder who was legally exempt from the cultivator's labour dues. What survives all of this is still substantial and should not be minimised — a temple network coordinating armed action across a whole province for three generations is a real and unusual thing, and Nobunaga would need ten years and tens of thousands of dead to break its successor. But it was a coalition with warriors in it, and it ended by seating a governor of the old family. The province was not held by peasants, and its own chronicler did not quite say it was.

The apex that had no floor and could not be replaced

While all this proceeded, the institution at the very top of the stack went quietly bankrupt. The court's landed income had been dissolving for two centuries; the Ōnin fighting burned the mansions of the nobility along with everything else, the Imperial Court's finances dried up, and the Court declined. The consequences were not abstract. Courtiers of the period could recall, on the one hand, Emperor Go-Nara's ten-year wait for an enthronement ceremony, and, on the other, the treatment accorded the former emperor Go-Tsuchimikado, whose corpse rested at the Kurōdo Palace for forty-four days in the year 1500 because no funds were available for his funeral. Go-

Nara's accession in 1526 was not solemnised until the mid-1530s, and the Court was so impoverished that a nationwide appeal for contributions was made to pay for it. The sacred person at the summit of the Japanese order lay unburied for six weeks because the treasury could not meet an undertaker's bill.

Now set beside that the conduct of the men who by then held every gun in the country.

Oda Nobunaga, having taken Mino in 1567, adopted a new personal seal reading *tenka fubu* — literally "all under heaven, spreading military force," or more idiomatically "all the world by force of arms", though what *tenka* meant to him, and whether *bu* here carried its classical sense of ending war rather than making it, are both genuinely contested and should not be settled by translation. Having taken Kyoto he sought and received court rank; he had the era name changed; he did not touch the throne. When his siege of the Ikkō headquarters at Ishiyama had run a decade without result, what ended it was not a breach in the walls. The abbot Kennyo held a conference with his comrades after receiving a letter of advice from the imperial court via imperial envoys in April 1580, and surrendered a few weeks later; out of respect for the imperial order Nobunaga spared the lives of many of the defenders, and burned the fortress to the ground. A court that could not have compelled a single village ended the longest siege in Japanese history with a letter.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi went further and paid more. Born a commoner in Owari, he had himself adopted into the Konoe house, took the office of imperial regent in August 1585 and that of Chancellor of the Realm in February 1586, and was formally granted an entirely new clan name, Toyotomi, by the imperial court in 1586 — a surname invented for one man, which is a thing only a court that still mints something can do. He built a palace in Kyoto in 1587 and entertained the reigning emperor in it the following year. The familiar explanation for why he took the regency rather than the shogunate — that his birth disqualified him — is the standard account and may well be right, but it is contested: it has been argued that the last Ashikaga shogun was alive until 1597 and could have been made to adopt him had he wanted the title, and that in 1585 a moribund shogunate held nothing like the allure it acquired in retrospect once Ieyasu revived it. The honest statement is that we do not know, and that the uncertainty itself is informative about how little the office was worth before it was made worth something.

What is not uncertain is the arithmetic on the other side. Two men who between them held every soldier, every fortress and every port in Japan spent real money, real deference and real time acquiring pieces of paper from an institution with no army, no revenue and no capacity to refuse them. Nobody made them do it. That expenditure,

freely incurred by men who already had the force, is the strongest available evidence that some audience required it — and the audience was not the peasantry, who were held by the floor, but the armed class itself, for whom a rank issued from Kyoto was the only currency in which one warlord's precedence over another could be denominated without another battle. The warrant was a fiction in the precise sense that it rested on a claim about descent from the age of the gods. It was not a fiction in the sense of fooling anyone about the location of the swords. It was the only non-violent instrument in the country for ranking violent men, and it survived because eight centuries earlier somebody had drafted it without a clause by which it could be lost.

The build Ieyasu watched fail first

Nobunaga's programme, from 1570, was the systematic destruction of every rival concentration of organised force — and the concentrations that took longest to break were the religious ones, because they were the only ones running on conviction rather than on tenure. In the ninth month of 1571 he took an army of some thirty thousand men in three columns onto Mount Hiei, firing the storehouses, granaries and attendants' houses of the lower slopes before advancing on the main compound of Enryaku-ji, the Tendai establishment that had loomed over Kyoto for six hundred years. The dead cannot be counted; period chronicle and modern estimate diverge by an order of magnitude, from a couple of thousand to something approaching twenty thousand, and the range should be left standing rather than resolved. In 1574, at Nagashima, he finished a four-year campaign against the Ikkō fortifications of the Ise delta by walling the surviving population into the inner works and burning them; the figure given in the standard accounts is that approximately twenty thousand people were crammed into the inner outposts, and all were burned to death before any could escape. The Ishiyama siege ran from August 1570 until the surrender of 1580, and only the court's intervention closed it.

Ten years, three campaigns, and tens of thousands dead to remove from the field the one kind of order that could raise armies without paying them. That is the price of destroying a cheap-pole rival, and it is a bill the Tokugawa would never have to pay again — one of the largest inheritances Ieyasu received and one of the least visible in the later record, because the order that inherits a solved problem does not notice it as an achievement.

And then, on the twenty-first of June 1582, at a temple in Kyoto with a small guard, Nobunaga was killed by Akechi Mitsuhide — one of his own senior generals, a man he had raised, armed and given a province precisely because he was capable. There is no more compact demonstration in the corpus of the problem that has no reliable

solution. A centre cannot exist without capable men; the capacity that makes a man useful is the capacity that lets him replace the centre; and no amount of success against external rivals touches that fact at all. Nobunaga had spent twelve years dismantling every competing floor in central Japan and was killed by the floor he had built himself.

The build Ieyasu watched fail second

Hideyoshi, third among the surviving Oda commanders, won the succession war within days, destroyed the senior claimant the following year, and then spent fifteen years constructing the machinery that the Tokugawa would inherit almost entire.

He assessed the country. The nationwide survey conducted from the 1580s recorded fields by grade and yield and attached each to a named cultivator, expressing everything in *koku* of rice — so that the basic unit of the settlement ceased to be an area of ground and became a quantity of annual production, which is a far more useful thing to grant, tax, compare, and take away. He separated the classes by law. In the edict of 1588 he ordered the disarmament of the countryside, and the document's own reasoning is worth having exactly as it stands, because the drafting shows what the drafter was worried about: farmers of all provinces were forbidden swords, short swords, bows, spears, firearms or other weapons, on the stated ground that if unnecessary implements of war are kept, the collection of annual rent may become more difficult, and without provocation uprisings can be fomented. Rent first, risings second. The confiscated metal, the edict continued, would not be wasted; it would be used as nails and bolts in the construction of the Great Image of Buddha, whereby the farmers would gain merit in this life and the next, and the whole measure was framed as compassionate concern for their well-being and the foundation of the peace and happiness of all the people. A commentary of the period, reproduced beside the edict in the standard documentary collection, records the plain view of an observer who watched it happen: the Great Buddha was the ostensible purpose, and the true purpose was to stop peasant risings.

That pairing is the method of this whole collection in miniature — the public reason and the working reason set side by side in the same generation, neither of them invented later by a hostile historian. But both reasons, the stated and the observed, are about the cultivator, and the cultivator was not really the point; and this is where the standard picture of the sword hunt has to be put down, because it obscures the most consequential act of the entire unification.

The confiscation was never remotely complete. Weapons remained widespread in villages for generations afterwards, and the policy was tied less to total disarmament than to the creation of a new social order in which the right to bear arms and openly wear swords became increasingly associated with the warrior class; surveys under the

fifth Tokugawa shogun found that in some domains peasants possessed more firearms than samurai did. The prevailing view in the recent Japanese scholarship is accordingly that the edict was aimed at the separation of warrior from farmer, controlling the use of weapons by revoking the right of the peasantry to wear a sword, and not at disarming the peasantry — a distinction that sounds academic and is not, because it identifies the class actually being legislated against.

That class was the *jizamurai*: the armed, landholding village warriors who had supplied the fighting edge of every league of the previous century. They were amphibious by definition — sword and ground at once — and it was the combination, not either element, that made them dangerous. Run the three instruments together and see what they do to such a family. The survey put every parcel in a register against a named cultivator. The sword hunt made open arms-bearing a mark of warrior status. The edict of 1591 forbade samurai and their military servants to become farmers or merchants, banned peasants from abandoning their fields for commerce or wage labour, and prohibited warriors from employing servants who had fled their original masters. Between them these left the amphibious middle exactly one decision, and it was irreversible: the farmer-samurai and others who existed between warrior and farmer officially had to choose which side their family would fall on, for centuries to come. Keep the land and become a registered cultivator with no right to arms; keep the sword and go into a lord's castle town as a stipendiary with no land at all. The cumulative effect, as the standard account has it, was that samurai, merchants and craftsmen came to live in castle towns and other large settlements, while the villages consisted only of farmers.

This is the founding act of the peace, and it is not the disarming of the powerless. It is the legal liquidation of the one stratum out of which an armed coalition could be assembled from below the level of the great lords. After it, every man in Japan who held a weapon lawfully lived on somebody's stipend in somebody's town and owned no ground; and a warrior who owns nothing but his sword and his rice allowance is an employee. That the ruler who legislated this had himself begun on the wrong side of the line he was drawing, and crossed it, is the sharpest single fact of the period — he closed the door behind him, and the country never opened it again.

Then he invaded Korea, twice, with a hundred and fifty thousand seaborne troops in 1592 and a hundred and forty thousand in 1597. The schools that explain this by one motive — megalomania, or trade, or the disposal of soldiers — each hold one true thread. Reconstruct the position instead and the pressures converge: a very large class of idle, battle-hardened warriors who were a danger at home and an asset abroad; great vassals with intact armies and long memories who would be far away and spending

their own revenues; a ruler of common birth whose authority rested on conquest and who therefore needed more of it; an inherited continental ambition; a newly and thinly unified realm that a common external enemy would bind; and a lapsed trade with Ming China worth reopening. One act paid on every account at once, which is precisely why it was irresistible. What his vantage did not contain — a Korean navy that would cut his supply lines, and Ming armies that would come south in force — explains the shape of the catastrophe as exactly as the pressures explain the launch.

The succession he had spent his life preparing he then destroyed himself. His only son having died in infancy, he had adopted his nephew Hidetsugu and installed him as regent; when a second son, Hideyori, was born in 1593 the arrangement became untenable, and in 1595 Hidetsugu was accused of plotting a coup and ordered to commit seppuku; his entire family, including children, wives and mistresses, were executed at Sanjōgawara. The count is given in the sources as thirty-one to thirty-nine women and children. Among them was a daughter of the northern lord Mogami Yoshiaki who had only just arrived in Kyoto to become Hidetsugu's concubine and had not yet even met her future husband, and whose life Hideyoshi refused to spare. The act removed the last adult male of the house and left, as the sole heir to a realm of armed lords, a child of two.

Three years later, dying, the most powerful man in the history of the country to that date took a brush and wrote to the five great lords he had named as guardians. The document survives in his own hand, and its whole content is one request repeated until the repetition becomes the meaning:

> 秀より事、なりたち候やうに、此かきつけのしゆ（衆）としてたのミ申し候。なに事も、此ほかにはおもひのこす事なく候。
> 返々、秀より事たのミ申し候。五人のしゆ（衆）たのミ申し候。……なごりおしく候。以上。

That Hideyori may be established — I beg it of the men named in this writing. Of all things, I have nothing else left in my mind besides this. And then, in the postscript: *Again and again — concerning Hideyori, I beg you. The five of you, I beg you. … It is hard to part. That is all.*

Five appeals in a dozen lines, from a man who could have any person in Japan killed by sending a word. He had built an assessment system, a status law, a disarmed countryside, a palace, a Great Buddha, a new surname and the highest office the court could confer, and he could bequeath all of it. The one thing he actually held — the credible expectation that organised violence would follow his instruction — was the

one thing no instrument could transfer. That is the finding this landscape hands forward, and it was demonstrated in front of every lord in Japan.

The position in 1600

Ieyasu had watched all of it from an unusually instructive seat, and his own formation had been an education in exactly the thing he would spend the rest of his life preventing. Born in 1542 or 1543 into a small Mikawa house squeezed between two larger ones, he was sent away as a political hostage, first to the Oda and then to the Imagawa, and remained one until his overlord's death at Okehazama in 1560 released him at about nineteen. In 1579, on the standard account, his wife and his eldest son Matsudaira Nobuyasu were accused of conspiring with the Takeda against Nobunaga; his wife was executed and Nobuyasu was forced to commit seppuku — a version now contested by scholarship arguing the quarrel was internal to the Tokugawa house rather than imposed from outside, though the outcome is not in doubt. He fought Hideyoshi to an expensive draw in 1584 and then submitted. And in 1590, after the last great independent house in the east was destroyed at Odawara, Hideyoshi stripped him of his ancestral provinces and ordered him transferred to eight provinces in the Kantō, with the aim of weakening him; Ieyasu moved his base to Edo, invested heavily in governing the region, placed his key retainers across it, and took former Takeda and Hōjō men into his service, so that the transfer left him stronger than before. By 1600 he held something in the order of two and a half million *koku*, the largest single holding in Japan.

That is a man whose field of the visible had been drawn by hostageship, by the killing of his own heir at another's word, by twenty years as the junior partner of a warlord murdered by his own general, and by fifteen more as the most dangerous vassal of a ruler who had tried to defuse him by moving him and had made him formidable instead. He had seen every failure mode from close range: succession by an infant, succession by an adopted nephew, dependence on sworn oaths, and the exposure of an unguarded lord to a capable subordinate. When the eighteen months after Hideyoshi's death ended at Sekigahara on 21 October 1600 in an engagement decided in a single morning — decided, at that, by which way one large contingent chose to move at noon — he had proved the last of those lessons himself, in public, by doing to the Toyotomi child exactly what he now had to ensure nobody could do to his own.

What he held afterwards was the largest redistribution of land in Japanese history. The accounts differ on the totals, as they should: around 6.3 million koku confiscated and redistributed, with eighty-seven daimyō houses of the western side losing all their land, or land confiscated from ninety-three daimyō on the losing side, totalling more

than five million koku. Either way he could remake the map of the country. What he could not do was make the map hold. Every man he enriched became a man with a castle, a revenue and armed retainers, and the Toyotomi heir still sat in Osaka with a domain of six hundred thousand *koku*, a great fortress and the name of the man who had unified Japan.

The materials in his reach were these. A country assessed field by field in units of yield, so that a lord's power could be written as a number and moved. A legal separation of the man who fights from the man who farms — which mattered not because it had emptied the villages of weapons, since it had not, but because it had dissolved the armed landholding middle that had made a century of provincial risings possible, leaving every lawful sword in Japan attached to a man who lived in a castle town on an allowance and owned no ground. The wreckage of the armed religious institutions, cleared at enormous cost by somebody else. A court in Kyoto that could mint precedence and nothing else, and had never once in eight centuries been able to withdraw what it granted. And a list of something like two hundred armed houses, sorted by whether they had been with him, against him, or late.

Those first three items are why the problem in front of him was as narrow as it was. Everything below the level of a lord had already been solved, by other men, at their expense. What remained was the two hundred names.

The population of the country he now held is not recoverable with any precision — the estimates run from about eleven to about twenty-two million, with the serious reconstructions clustering between twelve and seventeen — and almost none of those people had any bearing on his problem. His problem was the two hundred names on the list, and their retainers, and their retainers' retainers, and the ninety years since Kaga in which the whole country had learned that a man who wants what his lord has can generally get it if he is willing to move first.

Reading the field against the framework

This landscape confirms the collection's opening moves and returns four refinements, of which the second is the substantial one.

First, the recursion clause needs a plural. The principle that a conqueror meets not an aboriginal order but a naturalised former conquest holds here completely — the imperial institution is a Tang-modelled state naturalised over nine centuries, the warrior government a twelfth-century innovation naturalised over four. But Japan shows a configuration the colonial cases could not: successive winners who did not clear the apex they displaced but *kept it standing above them*, so that by 1600 the order contained four or five hollow summits at once. The framework's sharp question — is

there a seat, and can a stranger sit down — therefore has an unfamiliar answer. There were several seats; all were enterable; none of them delivered a single soldier; and the one that mattered most delivered nothing but the right to be ranked above other armed men. A study of a conquest from outside asks whether the conquered order left a capturable apex. A study of a consolidation from inside must ask a different question: *which of the several disused apexes on offer does the winner choose to occupy, and what does that choice tell you about whose recognition he actually needs?*

Second — and this is the finding to carry forward — a warrant drafted without a revocation clause outlives every floor that ever wears it. The men who wrote the code of 701 copied a Chinese state and deliberately declined to copy the Mandate of Heaven, grounding the emperor's authority in descent rather than in conduct. The immediate purpose was presumably to secure the dynasty then reigning. The eight-century consequence was that the Japanese apex became simultaneously indestructible and inoperable: no rival could ever allege forfeiture, and no rival could ever succeed to it, so the only available move against it was to go around it and leave it in place — which every winner from the twelfth century onward duly did. By 1500 the institution was so poor it could not bury a dead emperor for forty-four days, and in 1580 it ended the longest siege of the age with a letter. That combination — total fiscal destitution and undiminished conferring power — is the cleanest instance of revealed preference this collection has yet found, because the men paying were men who already held everything force can take and could have declined to pay at no risk whatever. The proposition to carry into other cases is that **the durability of a legitimating warrant depends less on how deeply it is believed than on whether its own founding document specifies conditions under which it can be lost.** A conditional mandate invites a challenger to argue the condition has failed. An unconditional one cannot be argued with, and therefore cannot be taken — only rented.

Third, the collection's proposition that structural change is elite survives its most attractive counter-example, and the surviving supplies a diagnostic worth carrying to every other case. Kaga looks, at first reading, like the one thing the framework says does not happen: the ruled rising, killing the governor, and holding a province for ninety years. It is not that, and the tells are three. The risers were backed by disaffected vassal families of the governor's own house; when he was dead those vassals installed his uncle as governor in his place, so the office was not abolished but re-occupied by the same family; and the military work was done not by cultivators but by the *jizamurai*, a numerous stratum that was legally samurai, held its land by hereditary right, carried the paired swords, and was exempt from the labour dues that defined a commoner. The correct description is a factional substitution inside the provincial

elite, executed by lower warriors against higher ones, coordinated by a temple network, and carried on the shoulders of a very large body of believing cultivators who were present at every stage and authored none of it. The creed was not a pretext — it was held, and it did the organisational work no secular rising of that scale could have done — but belief supplied the coordination, not the agency.

The diagnostic that falls out is simple enough to apply anywhere and sharp enough to be worth having: **where a record shows commoners defeating an aristocratic army, look for the intermediate armed stratum, and if you cannot find one, doubt the record.** Unarmed or lightly armed cultivators do not beat trained, armoured, mounted professionals; the arithmetic is not close. So an account of a successful popular rising is nearly always an account with a layer edited out of it — the village warrior, the disaffected retainer, the armed cleric, the mutinous garrison — and the edit is usually made downstream by people with a reason to prefer the simpler story. Both the movement's admirers and its enemies had such a reason here, which is why the phrase "a province held by the peasants" outlived the sentence it was cut from. The collection should treat this as a standing warning against its own most seductive failure mode, which is not cynicism but sentiment.

And the finding has a hard consequence downstream, which is why it belongs in the landscape rather than a footnote. If the jizamurai were what made a century of risings militarily possible, then the decisive instrument of the unification was not the confiscation of blades from ploughmen — which was never completed and was never really attempted — but the legal abolition of the amphibious middle itself. Sword *and* local land was the combination that produced warlords in embryo; the survey, the sword hunt and the status edict together forced every such family to surrender one half of it. Note the direction, because it inverts something this collection has documented elsewhere. The colonial settlements in the corpus pay a warlord to stop being a warlord by converting a capacity for violence into a possession, on the reasoning that a possession can be taken by a court while a retinue can only be taken by a war. Japan ran the same logic backwards at the lower rung: it stripped the possession from the man who had the capacity, leaving him with nothing but the capacity and no way to live on it except by renting it to a lord. Both motions disarm. One makes a landowner of a fighter; the other makes an employee of him. **The variable that decides which motion an order reaches for is where the dangerous man sits** — buy the great lord who is too strong to strip, strip the small one who is too numerous to buy.

Fourth, and setting the study's central problem: the floor of force is the one asset that cannot be bequeathed. Hideyoshi could and did transmit an assessed cadastre, a status law, a disarmed countryside, a fortune, a fortress, a new surname and

the second-highest office in the realm, and he transmitted every one of them successfully. What he could not transmit was the credible expectation, in the mind of each of two hundred armed men, that violence would follow his instruction — because that expectation was attached to him personally and died when he did. His five recorded appeals to the five regents are the sound of a man discovering this at the end. And because it happened publicly, and because Ieyasu was one of the five men addressed and the one who broke the arrangement, the problem the Tokugawa order was built to solve can be stated with unusual exactness. It was not how to hold the peasantry, which the sword hunt and the status edicts had largely settled. It was how to convert a personal ascendancy into something that would still be running when the man holding it was dead — how to make the lords' compliance a function of their own positions rather than of their fear of one particular sixty-year-old. Everything the next twelve modules examine is an answer to that, improvised in sequence by men solving the problem actually in front of them, and none of it was designed in advance by anyone.

A note on sources. The exact quotations here are of three kinds. The 1588 disarmament edict is quoted in the standard English rendering reproduced by Columbia University's Asia for Educators from David J. Lu's documentary collection, and only the two short phrases that carry the argument are given verbatim — the clause on rent collection and uprisings, and the promise of nails and bolts for the Great Image of Buddha; the remainder of the edict, and the contemporary commentary printed beside it stating that the Buddha was the ostensible purpose and the prevention of peasant risings the real one, are paraphrased. The provenance of that commentary is given in the collection but has not been independently traced to its manuscript here, and it should be treated as reliably contemporary but not further verified. The Japanese primary quotations are public-domain texts given in the original with the study's own translations: Jitsugo's line on Kaga, from the *Jitsugoki shūi*, where the wording 「近年ハ百姓ノ持タル國ノヤウニナリ行キ候」 is reproduced in the Japanese scholarly and antiquarian literature and where the familiar slogan 「百姓ノ持タル国」 is demonstrably a modern abbreviation of it; and Hideyoshi's autograph testament of the fifth day of the eighth month of Keichō 3 (1598), addressed to the five great lords, which is reproduced with minor kana-reading variants across several independent Japanese sources — the variants affect transcription, not sense.

Institutional and chronological matter follows the standard reference and scholarly accounts, paraphrased: the Taihō code of 701 and its two deliberate departures from the Tang model, including the rejection of the Mandate of Heaven; the establishment of the Ashikaga shogunate in 1338 and the devolution of power in Kyoto through

Hosokawa, Miyoshi and Matsunaga; the Ōnin War of 1467–77 and the structural shift from office to castle, vassal and land; the Yamashiro confederacy of 1485–93; the Kaga rising of 1487–88, including the backing of disaffected Togashi vassals, the installation of Masachika's uncle Yasutaka as governor in his place, and the legal status of the *jizamurai* as sword-bearing hereditary landholders exempt from commoner labour dues; the recent scholarly view that the 1588 edict aimed at the separation of warrior from farmer rather than at disarmament as such, and the evidence of firearms remaining in villages long afterwards; the court's finances, Go-Nara's delayed enthronement and the forty-four days of Go-Tsuchimikado's unburied corpse, which are as given in Lee Butler's *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467–1680*; Nobunaga's seal of 1567, the destruction of Enryaku-ji in 1571, the third Nagashima siege of 1574, and the imperially mediated surrender at Ishiyama in 1580; Hideyoshi's regency of 1585, the Toyotomi surname of 1586, the land survey, the status edict of 1591, the invasions of 1592 and 1597, the destruction of Hidetsugu's household in 1595, and the regency council of 1598; and Ieyasu's hostage years, the deaths of his wife and eldest son in 1579, the Kantō transfer of 1590, and Sekigahara on 21 October 1600.

Contested figures are given as ranges and should not be hardened. The dead at Enryaku-ji are not recoverable and estimates diverge from roughly two thousand to roughly twenty thousand; the twenty thousand at Nagashima is the figure the standard accounts give and rests on chronicle sources with an interest in the scale. The executions at Sanjōgawara are given variously as thirty-one and thirty-nine. The Sekigahara redistribution is reported as eighty-seven houses and 6.3 million *koku* in some accounts and ninety-three houses and over five million in others. Japan's population in 1600 is estimated between about eleven and twenty-two million, the serious reconstructions clustering between twelve and seventeen; the wide spread is a fact about the sources and not a defect in any one of them. Two interpretative points are flagged rather than settled: whether Hideyoshi was barred from the shogunate by his birth or simply declined a worthless title, where the traditional account and the revisionist reading (Turnbull among others) disagree; and whether the deaths of Ieyasu's wife and son in 1579 were demanded by Nobunaga, as the standard narrative holds, or arose within the Tokugawa house, as recent Japanese scholarship argues. Where the record is genuinely open, this study leaves it open. One correction should be recorded rather than quietly absorbed, because the project's method makes its own errors part of what it is measuring: an earlier draft of this landscape read the Kaga episode as a possible instance of popular authorship and deferred the question, when the evidence already gathered for that draft — the disaffected vassal families, the seating of Yasutaka, and the presence of the jizamurai in every list of the league's composition

— settled it in the other direction. The error was not a missing fact. It was the sentimental reading of facts already in hand, which is the failure mode this collection is most exposed to and least likely to notice, and it was caught by the author rather than by the research. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

In Order, Do Not Forget Disorder

Module 1 · The Floor of Force — the founding read as one continuous operation from the field at Sekigahara to the ash of Osaka and the demolition orders of the following weeks; and the reconstruction of the armed force that held the order down — whose men it was made of, who paid for it, and why an army that would never fight again was commanded by law to keep drilling

The conventional periodisation makes Sekigahara the founding of the Tokugawa order and the destruction of Osaka fifteen years later a mopping-up. Structurally this is the wrong way round, and getting it right is the whole of this module's argument.

What Sekigahara produced was an ascendancy: one man in possession of more land, more men and more prestige than anyone else alive. That is precisely the asset the previous generation had just proved cannot be handed on. Toyotomi Hideyoshi had died holding an ascendancy of exactly that kind, together with a cadastral survey, a status law, a disarmed countryside, a fortune, the second-highest office at court and five sworn guardians — and everything transferred except the one thing that mattered, which evaporated at the moment of his death and was gone within two years. Ieyasu had been one of the five guardians and was the man who broke the arrangement. He therefore knew, better than anyone in Japan, exactly what a battlefield victory was worth on its own.

So the founding act is properly dated not by the battle but by the completion of transferability, and read that way it is one continuous operation in five moves across fifteen years: the field in 1600, the title in 1603, the abdication in 1605, the extinction of the rival house in 1614–15, and the legislation of the weeks immediately following. Each move answers a defect the previous move exposed. Only at the end of the sequence does the thing being held become an institution rather than a personal supremacy — and the sequence's most important move is not the one with the corpses in it.

The battle that settled nothing

The engagement of the fifteenth day of the ninth month of Keichō 5 — 21 October 1600 — was the largest field battle in Japanese history, fought by something in the

order of a hundred and sixty thousand men, and it was decided in a morning by a defection. The decisive act was the choice of one large contingent on a hillside to come down on the eastern side rather than the western, after which several more followed within minutes and the western army disintegrated.

The composition of the two armies is the fact that matters and it is routinely obscured by the later story. This was not the Tokugawa against the Toyotomi. Ieyasu's front line at Sekigahara was substantially made of Hideyoshi's own men — commanders raised, enfeoffed and formed by the house whose child sat in Osaka — fighting other men of the same house over which faction should administer the settlement in that child's name. The Toyotomi heir was not on the field and neither side claimed to be fighting him. That is why the victory settled nothing structurally: the winner's army was composed of men whose primary allegiance was to a house he would eventually have to destroy, and every one of them knew it before he did.

The redistribution that followed was the largest in Japanese history, and the figures in the standard accounts differ as such figures do: around 6.3 million koku confiscated and redistributed, with eighty-seven daimyō houses of the western side losing all their land, or land taken from ninety-three daimyō totalling more than five million koku. What he did with it is more instructive than the total. Rewards to the Toyotomi-raised commanders who had won him the battle were enormous — Fukushima Masanori's assessment rose from 290,000 to 498,000 koku in Aki and Bingo, Kuroda Nagamasa's from 180,000 to 520,000 in Chikuzen, and Yamauchi Kazutoyo went from 50,000 to 200,000 as lord of Tosa — and every one of those grants was placed at a distance. Ieyasu kept the outside lords away from the Tokugawa heartland of Edo and its region and from Osaka and Kyoto, awarding them territory in the west, in Kyūshū and Shikoku, while placing small domains held by his hereditary vassals and blocks of shogunal land among them.

He was buying loyalty and manufacturing rivals in the same instrument. The houses he enriched in 1600 — Shimazu in the far south, Mōri in the west, and the men he seated in Tosa and Kyūshū — are the houses that would still be there, still rich, still outside the government, two and a half centuries later when the order came down. That is not a criticism of the decision. There was nothing else to do with a victory won by other men's armies. It is a description of what a settlement built on gratitude has to contain.

The title, and what he made it worth

In the second month of 1603 the emperor Go-Yōzei appointed Ieyasu *sei-i taishōgun*. The office he took had been vacant since 1573 and had been worth so little

in the interval that Hideyoshi, at the height of his power, had either been refused it or had not troubled to want it — the sources genuinely disagree — and had reached instead for the imperial regency and a surname invented for him.

The court's warrant was not conditional and never had been; nobody could take it back and nobody could claim it had been forfeited. What it could do was rank a man, and ranking violent men without another battle was the one service it had gone on performing through two centuries of its own destitution. Ieyasu used it, and by using it made it valuable — which is the ordinary way an office acquires worth, and worth stating plainly because the later Tokugawa account would present the shogunate as an ancient dignity descending upon its rightful holder. The claim of Minamoto descent that accompanied the appointment belongs to the same category and should be named for what the record makes it: a genealogy assembled for the purpose. Nobody at the time appears to have been deceived and it did not matter that they were not, because the function of the pedigree was not to persuade anyone of an ancestry but to make the appointment procedurally unobjectionable. The instrument had to look regular. It did not have to be believed.

The abdication: the whole problem solved in one move

Two years later, in the fourth month of 1605, Ieyasu resigned the office to his son Hidetada. He was sixty-two, in good health, at the height of his power, and unchallenged. In order to demonstrate that the country's government would remain hereditarily in Tokugawa hands, Ieyasu resigned the shogunal title after only two years, in 1605, in favour of his son Hidetada; and Hidetada in turn passed it to his son Iemitsu in 1623. The premature succession was duly ratified by imperial investiture. He then went on governing for eleven more years from retirement, running what amounted to a second administration at Sunpu Castle, staffed by trusted men not included in his son's cabinet, while Hidetada held the official government at Edo.

This is the most economical move in the entire founding and it cost nothing. Set it against what it answers. Hideyoshi had attempted to transfer his position by document, oath and deathbed appeal — five times in a dozen lines — and the transfer failed the moment there was no living man behind it to make refusal expensive. Ieyasu did not attempt to bequeath anything. He performed the transfer while he was still alive to punish anyone who tested it, and then stood behind the result for eleven years, so that by the time he died in 1616 the succession had already happened, already been obeyed, and already been ratified by the court. Hidetada was not an heir waiting to inherit a supremacy; he was the shogun, and had been for a decade, and the man who had made him so was watching.

The lesson generalises beyond this case and is worth stating as a proposition: **a personal ascendancy cannot be bequeathed, but it can be transferred early and guaranteed in person.** The holder converts an asset that dies with him into a demonstrated precedent, at the price of a title he goes on exercising anyway. The Tokugawa ran the move twice in twenty years and never had to run it again, because after two uncontested successions the third was no longer an experiment.

The war that had to be found

That left one thing standing. Hideyori, at Osaka, had been reduced after 1600 to the rank of daimyo with territory yielding 600,000 koku. He commanded no army and had never fought. What he had was a name, an enormous fortune, and the strongest fortress in Japan — which together made him not a rival but something more dangerous to a new order, a place for dissatisfied men to go.

The pretext, when it came, was eight characters on a bell. Hideyori had funded the rebuilding of the temple his father had raised — the same Great Buddha for which the confiscated swords of 1588 had supposedly been melted into nails — and the new bell carried a dedicatory inscription including the phrases "May the nation be at peace" (国家安康, kokka ankō) and "May the lord and his vassals be prosperous and cheerful" (君臣豊楽, kunshin hōraku). The shogunate's readers reported that the first phrase split the characters of Ieyasu's name (家康) in order to curse him, and that the second concealed the claim that the Toyotomi (豊臣) would rise again. Modern historians generally regard the episode as a political manipulation used to remove the last serious threat.

It is worth pausing on what kind of object this is, because it is not a lie in the ordinary sense and reading it as one misses the mechanism. Nobody at Osaka believed the charge. It is unlikely that anyone at Sunpu believed it either. The lords summoned to the campaign did not need to believe it and were not asked to. What the accusation produced was a *record* — a stated cause, entered in the proper form, which allowed every man who brought his contingent to describe himself afterwards as having obeyed a summons rather than as having chosen a side against the house that had made him. Deniability among the coalition, not conviction in anybody's mind, is what the fiction was manufacturing. That is a different function from the ones this collection usually finds a founding story performing, and it deserves to be named as its own.

In November 1614 Ieyasu led 164,000 men to Osaka. The winter campaign failed against the fortifications, and was closed by a negotiated truce whose terms included the filling of the outer moats — after which the fortress was no longer a fortress. When the fighting resumed in the summer the outcome was arithmetic. At Tennōji on 3 June

1615, 150,000 Tokugawa troops faced more than 71,000 defenders; the Tokugawa lost some 8,000 dead and the Toyotomi side between 15,000 and 18,600, close to half its strength. The castle fell that day, and the following day Hideyori and his mother took their own lives in the last tower still holding.

What followed the fall was not incidental to the founding but part of it. Hideyori's son Kunimatsu, aged eight, was captured and beheaded in Kyoto — some accounts give his age as seven. Hideyoshi's grave was destroyed by the shogunate along with the Toyokuni Shrine in Kyoto, and there are records of pillage and mass rape by Tokugawa forces at the close of the siege. The line, the tomb, and the shrine at which the dead unifier had been worshipped as a god were removed together, which tells you the operation was understood by its authors as the erasure of a rival warrant and not merely the killing of a claimant.

And then the naming. The era name was changed from Keichō to Genna immediately following the siege, and the end of the conflict is called the Genna Armistice — 元和偃武, Genna enbu, in which *enbu* is the laying down of arms, the weapons put away. The phrase is accurate. It is also a description of a country in which the last independent armed household had been burned out four weeks earlier and its eight-year-old head executed on a riverbed. Both things are true at once and the study's whole method is to keep them on the same page.

The summer of legislation

The demolition orders went out within weeks. On the thirteenth day of the intercalary sixth month of Keichō 20 — 7 August 1615 — the *ikkoku ichijō rei*, the one-castle-per-province decree, ordered every daimyō to destroy every castle in his territory except the one he resided in. It was issued under the joint seal of Doi Toshikatsu, Andō Shigenobu and Sakai Tadayo and promulgated in Hidetada's name, though its author was the retired Ieyasu — the succession working in public, the father drafting and the son signing. Its purpose is stated in the Japanese scholarly summaries without euphemism: to reduce the military strength of the daimyō, and of the western lords in particular; issued immediately after the summer campaign, it was aimed at preventing not only revolt against the shogunate but war between daimyō, and some four hundred castles are said to have been pulled down within a few days. Wider figures circulate in the popular literature and should be treated with caution, but the direction is not in doubt, and the second half of the stated purpose is the more important one. A government that forbids its lords to fight *each other* is claiming the monopoly, not merely defending itself.

In the seventh month the assembled lords were called to Fushimi and read the law. After the fall of Osaka, Ieyasu had the monk Ishin Sūden and others draft the code; on the seventh day of the seventh month the daimyō were gathered at Fushimi Castle where Hidetada was, Sūden read it aloud, and it was promulgated — thirteen articles in classical Chinese, each with an appended commentary. The commentaries are the most valuable part of the document, because a law states what is forbidden while its gloss states what the drafter is afraid of.

The first article requires the warrior houses to devote themselves to letters and to arms — 文武弓馬之道、專可相嗜事 — and its commentary reads: 左文右武、古之法也、不可不兼備矣。弓馬是武家之要樞也。號兵爲凶器、不得已而用之。治不忘乱、何不勵修錬乎 — *letters on the left and arms on the right is the law of antiquity, and one must have both; bow and horse are the essential pivot of the warrior house; weapons are called instruments of ill omen and are used only when there is no help for it; in order, do not forget disorder — how then should one not press on with training?* That sentence is the founding document of two and a half centuries of peace instructing the armed class to keep preparing for a war the same document forbids, and the tension is not an inconsistency. It is the maintenance schedule. A floor of force that is never used still has to remain credible, and credibility has an upkeep bill.

The sixth article: 一諸國居城、雖爲修補、必可言上、况新儀之搆營、堅令停止事 — *even for repairs to the residence castles of the provinces, report must always be made; still less may new construction be undertaken, which is strictly prohibited* — with the gloss 城過百雉、國之害也。峻壘浚隍、大乱本也, *a castle beyond a hundred* chih *is a harm to the realm; steep ramparts and deep moats are the root of great disorder.* Written, that summer, by men who had spent a winter failing to take a castle with steep ramparts and deep moats and had only prevailed by persuading its owner to fill them in. The commentary is autobiography.

Two further articles name the fear directly. One requires that anyone in a neighbouring province who attempts innovations or forms a faction be reported at once, with the gloss observing that men everywhere form parties and few are wise, so that some disobey their lords and fall out with their neighbours — which makes every daimyō a legal informer against every other. Another forbids marriage without permission, glossed in the recension of 1629, which preserves the commentaries, with the flat statement that to form a party by means of a marriage connection is the foundation of treacherous scheming. Castles, combinations, and marriages: the three things out of which a coalition against the centre had ever been assembled, prohibited in one document within eight weeks of the last such coalition being burned.

Four years later the law was demonstrated on the largest possible subject. Fukushima Masanori — the man whose contingent had led Ieyasu's front line at Sekigahara, holder of nearly half a million *koku* in Aki and Bingo — repaired storm-damaged walls at Hiroshima Castle. In 1619 the repair of stonework broken by a typhoon was treated as a breach of the Laws for the Military Houses; his 500,000 koku in Aki and Bingo were confiscated and he was transferred to a holding of 45,000 koku in Shinano and Echigo. The shogunate had ordered the repaired sections demolished; he complied only in part, and the punishment followed. No army marched. A great lord who had helped make the dynasty lost nine-tenths of his revenue over masonry paperwork, and the message to the other hundred and ninety was not about walls.

What the floor was actually made of

Strip away the legislation and ask the plainer question: on the day the laws were read at Fushimi, who would actually have fought for the shogun, and how many were they?

The core was the house itself. The Tokugawa held direct lands that grew across the first half-century into the largest single revenue block in the country — the figures given for the mid-seventeenth century put the shogunate's direct assessment in the region of six to seven million *koku* out of a national total approaching twenty-four million, a share no other house came within an order of magnitude of. Attached to it were the direct retainers, and their numbers are smaller than the legend. An official survey of 1722 recorded some 5,200 bannermen — the hatamoto, those with the right of audience with the shogun — supplemented by more than 17,000 housemen who did not have that right. The popular expression was "the eighty thousand banners," and the figure of roughly eighty thousand is reached only when the retainers of the bannermen and housemen are counted in as well. Twenty-two thousand direct vassals, perhaps eighty thousand men in all: a substantial standing force by the standards of any contemporary European state, and nothing remotely close to the numbers that had taken Osaka.

The rest of the army was rented, and the terms of the tenancy are the single most diagnostic fact in this module. Military service was owed by every daimyō in proportion to his assessment, on a published schedule: the quota of men required of a lord assessed at 100,000 koku was 2,155. The shogun's field army was therefore an arithmetic sum of obligations on other men's houses, raised, equipped, paid and commanded by those men, and delivered on summons. When Ieyasu brought 164,000 to Osaka he did not own them.

This should be alarming, and by the collection's existing reading it is. The medieval European settlement granted land in exchange for a stated number of armed men on

summons, which solved the coordination problem and installed a permanent civil-war risk in the same clause, because the king's army was the sum of his barons' retinues and could at any moment become the army that removed him. The whole political history of baronial revolt is that clause coming due. The Tokugawa settlement keeps the clause in full. Every lord in Japan retained his own armed retainers, his own castle town, and a standing legal duty to produce a fixed body of troops. On the face of it the order had installed the classic defect at the very moment of its founding.

It did not come due, and the reason is the summer of 1615. What the collection has been reading as a defect in the service clause is not in the clause at all. A retinue threatens a centre only if it can be *combined* — if it has a fortress to hold, neighbours to ally with, kin to bind, and a moment when the others are looking away. The one-castle decree removed the fortresses. The marriage article removed the alliances. The faction-reporting article converted every neighbour from a potential ally into a legally obliged informer. And the map drawn after Sekigahara had already put the hereditary Tokugawa vassals and blocks of shogunal land on the roads between the great outside lords and the capital, so that no two of them could concentrate without passing through the government. The retinues survived intact for two and a half centuries. The capacity to add them together did not survive the summer.

The revision is therefore this: **the medieval failure mode is not produced by paying an elite in armed service; it is produced by leaving the armed elite combinable.** An order that grants retinues and then legislates fortification, marriage and assembly can run the medieval settlement indefinitely without the medieval outcome. That is a real amendment to how this collection has been reading the consideration clause, and Japan is the case that forces it.

The floor that was never used again

After 1615 the apparatus assembled here was deployed at scale exactly once. In the winter of 1637 the peasantry of Shimabara and Amakusa rose against a crushing assessment under lords of exceptional brutality, joined by masterless warriors and organised around the proscribed Christian faith, and withdrew into the ruins of a castle that had itself been dismantled under the one-castle decree twenty-three years earlier. At the siege of Hara Castle, from 22 January to 11 April 1638, some 125,000 shogunal troops, assisted by naval gunfire from a Dutch East India Company vessel, faced about 12,000 fighters; the government lost around 20,000 killed and wounded, and between 20,000 and 38,000 of the defenders and the civilians with them were killed. The garrison was destroyed to the last, or nearly so.

Two things about that episode belong in this module rather than a later one. The first is who the rebels were. The unwillingness of the daimyō to rise against the Tokugawa stood in contrast to the readiness of thousands of rōnin; the real problem was the growing unrest among a vast population of disbanded warriors relegated to uncertain futures — which is to say that the only large-scale violence the order faced in its first century came not from the lords it had legislated against but from the men its own settlement had made surplus, fighting under a creed it had banned. The second is the silence afterwards. For roughly two hundred years following 1638 nothing on that scale was attempted again by anyone.

That silence is the transition this whole study exists to measure, and this module must be careful not to claim more of it than it can carry. An order whose floor is never used may be one whose people have come to believe in it; it may equally be one that has legislated away the preconditions of using force against it, so that the ledger comes out against revolt for every individual subject without any belief being involved at all. Those two conditions look identical from outside and are entirely different things. Distinguishing them is the work of the modules on formation and on the cost column, and Module 1's honest contribution is only to establish that by 1638 the physical and legal capacity for organised armed resistance had been removed with unusual thoroughness — the fortresses gone, the alliances criminalised, the arms attached to status rather than to land, and the one stratum that had ever assembled a rising from below dissolved by law a generation earlier.

What remains is the first article, and it is the right place to end. A warrior class of perhaps a million and a half people, with nothing to fight, was instructed by the founding law of the peace to go on practising the bow and the horse and never to forget disorder while living in order. For two and a half centuries it obeyed. The whole enormous apparatus of the samurai in the Tokugawa period — the training halls, the schools of swordsmanship, the codes of conduct, the ancestral armour maintained in houses whose heads had never seen a battlefield — is, at its foundation, the upkeep on a threat that had to remain credible and could never be tested, because testing it would have revealed what it had become. That bill is one of the largest single items this order ever paid, and the men who wrote the first article in the summer of 1615 wrote it into the law before anyone had begun to guess what it would cost.

Reading the founding against the framework

Four returns, of which the third is the substantial one.

First, date a founding by the completion of transferability, not by the decisive battle. This collection, following the ordinary historical convention, has generally

treated the founding conquest as the module's object and dated it by the fighting. Japan shows the two coming apart by fifteen years. Sekigahara produced a supremacy that the previous generation had just demonstrated cannot be inherited; what made the Tokugawa order an order was the sequence that converted it, and the conversion was complete in 1605 — a decade before the last enemy died. The diagnostic to carry forward is simple and should be applied to every case in the corpus: **a founding is finished when the holder has demonstrated in public, while still alive to enforce the demonstration, that what he holds can pass to another man.** Where a study finds a founder who never performed that demonstration, expect the order to be tested at his death, and expect the test to be the real founding or the real ending.

Second, the early abdication is a general and remarkably cheap solution to the untransferable floor. Ieyasu resigned an office at sixty-two, unchallenged, in perfect health, and went on ruling from behind it for eleven years. The move costs a title the holder continues to exercise in fact and it buys the conversion of a personal ascendancy into a precedent that has already been obeyed once before anybody has an incentive to test it. It was repeated in 1623 and never needed again. The corpus should look for the same manoeuvre elsewhere — a designation performed early rather than a succession arranged late — and should note where it was available and not taken, because the cases where a founder held his office until death are precisely the cases where the succession crisis arrives.

Third, and the amendment this module actually forces: the medieval defect is combinability, not the service clause. The reading this collection has carried is that a settlement paying an elite in exchange for armed service installs a civil-war risk in the same clause, because the ruler's army becomes the sum of retinues that can be turned against him — with the modern colonial settlement performing the identical grant with the service clause deleted and the capacity for violence stripped by the same government in the same decade. Japan does neither. It keeps the service clause in full and published form, down to a stated quota of 2,155 men for a hundred-thousand-*koku* lord, leaves every daimyō his retainers and his castle town for two and a half centuries, and does not suffer the medieval outcome even once. What it removed instead, in a single summer, were the four preconditions of concentration: the surplus fortresses, the marriage alliances, the lawful possibility of combination, and the geographic ability of two great houses to reach one another without passing through the government. **A retinue is not a threat; a coalition of retinues is a threat, and the two can be separated by legislation.** This is a genuine correction and it should be carried into every case where an armed elite is co-opted: ask not whether the grantees

kept armed capacity, which they very often did, but whether they retained the physical, legal and social means of adding that capacity together.

Fourth, a founding fiction may be aimed at deniability rather than at belief. The war that completed the founding was opened on a reading of eight characters cast into a temple bell, and the reading persuaded nobody — not the accused, not the accusers, and not, so far as the record shows, the lords who answered the summons. The collection has generally read a founding story as aimed at some audience's conviction: the metropole's taxpayers, the army's conscience, the governed themselves. Here the audience is a coalition of men who had every reason to know the charge was manufactured and who needed it anyway, because it supplied each of them with a form of words in which his participation was obedience to a lawful summons rather than a choice to destroy the house that had raised him. The refinement is that **the earliest legal fictions of a new order are often addressed not to what anybody believes but to what everybody will be able to say afterwards** — and a fiction that fails completely as persuasion can still succeed completely at its actual job. Where a study finds a pretext so thin that it embarrasses the historians, it should ask who was thereby relieved of having to admit what he was doing, rather than assuming somebody was fooled.

A note on sources. The primary quotations here are public-domain texts of 1615 and after, given in the original with this study's own translations. The Laws for the Military Houses of the Genna era are quoted from the text of the *Shiseki shūran* recension reproduced on Japanese Wikisource: the first article and its commentary (文武弓馬之道、專可相嗜事, with the gloss ending 治不忘乱、何不勵修錬乎), the article on castles and its commentary (諸國居城雖爲修補必可言上… / 城過百雉、國之害也。峻壘浚隍、大乱本也), and the article requiring the reporting of factions and innovations in neighbouring provinces. The gloss on the marriage article quoted here (以緣成黨、奸謀基也) is taken from the recension of Kan'ei 6 (1629), which preserves the commentaries; the annotations were removed in the revision of 1635, and readers should note that the exact wording of individual glosses varies between recensions even where the articles do not. The bell inscription of 1614 (国家安康 / 君臣豊楽) and the shogunate's reading of it are as reproduced in the standard accounts of the Shōmei incident.

Institutional and chronological matter follows the standard reference and scholarly accounts, paraphrased: the appointment of Ieyasu as shogun in 1603 and the abdication in favour of Hidetada in 1605, with the retired shogun's parallel administration at Sunpu; the one-castle decree of the intercalary sixth month of Keichō 20 (7 August 1615), its signatories, its authorship by Ieyasu, and its stated purpose of

reducing the military strength of the daimyō and preventing war between them; the drafting of the Laws for the Military Houses by Ishin Sūden, their promulgation at Fushimi on the seventh day of the seventh month, and their form as thirteen articles in classical Chinese with appended commentary; the attainder of Fukushima Masanori in 1619 for unauthorised repairs at Hiroshima; the composition of the shogunal retainer corps as recorded in the survey of 1722; and the military service schedule.

Contested figures are given as ranges and should not be hardened. The Sekigahara redistribution is variously reported as eighty-seven houses and 6.3 million *koku* and as ninety-three houses and over five million. The strength at Sekigahara is conventionally put near a hundred and sixty thousand in total and rests on chronicle sources. The casualties at Tennōji on 3 June 1615 are given as approximately 8,000 Tokugawa dead against 15,000 to 18,600 on the Toyotomi side, from forces of 150,000 and more than 71,000. The age of Toyotomi Kunimatsu at his execution is given as seven in some accounts and eight in others; the persistent Japanese tradition that he escaped and a double was executed in his place is recorded in the literature and is not treated here as established. The number of castles demolished under the 1615 decree is given in the Japanese reference literature as about four hundred within a few days; much larger reductions are claimed in the popular literature (from some three thousand castles to about a hundred and seventy) and have not been traced to a documentary basis. At Hara Castle in 1638 the figures are approximately 125,000 besiegers against about 12,000 fighters, with government losses near 20,000 killed and wounded and rebel and civilian deaths between 20,000 and 38,000. The Tokugawa direct assessment and the national total are given as they appear in the mid-seventeenth-century summaries, in the region of six to seven million *koku* against a national figure approaching twenty-four million, and both rest on the shogunate's own registers. The claim of Minamoto descent supporting the shogunal appointment is treated here as a constructed genealogy, which is the general view of the scholarship, though the details of its construction are disputed and are not relied upon. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

Confirmed at the Joint

Module 2 · The Settlement — what was divided and in what instrument; a country whose entire landholding was reissued as eighteen hundred and thirty documents in a single operation, and a title that had to be granted again at every succession because it was never quite given in the first place

Before anything can be said about what the Tokugawa settlement created, the thing it replaced has to be on the page, because the conversion is invisible without it.

Two centuries earlier, land in Japan had been held under a system of layered claims. A single paddy could carry several named shares at once — the shrine or noble house holding the proprietary title, an intermediate manager holding the collection right, a local warrior holding a share for keeping order, the cultivator holding the right to work it — each share heritable, saleable, and litigable on its own. Nobody owned the field. What people owned were *positions in a chain of persons* attached to the field, and the chain was the property. That system had been dissolving since the fourteenth century and was effectively dead by the sixteenth, killed by the simple fact that a man with soldiers could ignore a claim from Kyoto.

What replaced it, through the Warring States century, was not a system at all but a fact. A lord held a province because he had taken it and could hold it; a village warrior held his fields because he was armed and there and his father had been; a peasant held what the local power let him keep. Possession rested on capacity and nothing else, which is exactly the condition the collection describes as a licence — worth precisely as long as the holder's arm, revocable by his death, insurable by nobody.

Hideyoshi performed the first half of the conversion. The nationwide survey conducted from the 1580s recorded each parcel by grade and expected yield, expressed it in *koku* of rice, and attached it to one named cultivator, which abolished the layering at a stroke: one field, one registered name, one assessment. From that point the country existed on paper as an arithmetic total. When the fourth Tokugawa shogun's officials came to add it up eighty years later they found a combined assessment of 17,814,200-odd koku across 224 daimyō houses.

The question this module has to answer is what the Tokugawa did with that arithmetic — and the answer is not what the collection's existing categories predict.

The document, and when it could be issued

The instrument was the domain grant: a *ryōchi hanmotsu* bearing the shogun's cursive signature for the greater houses, or a *ryōchi shuinjō* bearing his vermilion seal for the lesser, the distinction falling at a hundred thousand koku, with both together known simply as the honourable seal, and a separate schedule attached. That schedule is the important half. The domain schedule set out by name the specific provinces, districts and villages granted, with the koku assessment of each, so that the exact extent of the holder's territory was fixed — a district held entire was written as the whole district and needed no village list, while a district shared among several lords was written as "within" it, village by village.

Now the fact that gives the whole module its shape, and it comes from the drafting record rather than from any theory. The historian Fujii Jōji, working through the surviving grants, established the chronology of who issued them and when: Ieyasu became shogun in the second month of Keichō 8 (1603) but issued domain grants to the daimyō only in a very small number of exceptional cases; Hidetada received the shogunal appointment two years later and likewise issued none to daimyō during the Keichō era; the first were issued in Genna 3 — 1617, the year after Ieyasu died. Twelve years as shogun and not one grant of territory to a lord, and then a flow of them beginning within a year of his father's funeral.

The office did not confer the power to give. The man with the floor did, and while that man was alive at Sunpu the man holding the title in Edo could not perform the act that titles are for. This is the clearest illustration in the study of something the collection has argued abstractly: an instrument does not create a power, it records one, and where the two come apart it is the instrument that waits.

Eighteen hundred and thirty documents

The settlement acquired its final form under the fourth shogun in an administrative operation of remarkable ambition. In 1664 the domain grants and vermilion-seal letters of Tokugawa Ietsuna were issued to all the daimyō simultaneously, and in the following year to the court nobility and to the temples and shrines; what had been issued piecemeal across the three preceding reigns was now issued uniformly and at one time, with the result that the daimyō's right to their territories was completely subsumed within the shogun's nationwide authority. The total, daimyō and courtiers and religious houses together, came to 1,830 documents. Named officials handled each class — two for the daimyō lands, one for the court lands, two for the temples and

shrines, one for drafting and correction — and the resulting collection became the shogunate's basic reference for the governance of the country.

Consider what that operation is. In the space of two years, every square foot of productive land in Japan held by anybody above a peasant — every domain, every court estate, every temple endowment — was formally reissued from a single desk, under a single seal, in a single standardised form. Nothing was taken. Almost nobody's holdings changed. The entire content of the exercise was the act of granting again what everyone already had.

And thereafter it became the rule. From the Kanbun issue onward, at each change of shogun the daimyō were confirmed in the government of their territories by a fresh signed grant or sealed letter, in a procedure with its own name: tsugime ando, confirmation at the joint — the joint being the succession, the place where one length of bamboo meets the next. Fourteen shoguns, and at each joint the paper was made again.

An order that has genuinely conveyed ownership does not need to do this. The whole point of ownership is that it does not require renewal; a thing conveyed stays conveyed, which is what distinguishes it from a permission. The periodic mass reconfirmation is therefore not a ceremony laid over a settlement. It *is* the settlement, and its recurrence is the settlement telling you what it actually was.

What the grantee was given, which was not land

He was given a number and a job.

The daimyō did not own his domain in any sense the word will bear. Daimyō retained the right to tax their domains but did not hold those lands as private property; they governed as representatives of the shogun, and their authority was political rather than proprietary. The warrior class as a whole neither owned agricultural land nor had the legal right to acquire it. What the grant conveyed was the right to take the assessed yield of a named set of villages, in return for stated duties, for as long as the grant stood.

The unit made the arrangement portable, which was the point. A grant of ground can only be taken away by taking the ground; a grant of *assessed yield* can be satisfied anywhere, so a lord of three hundred thousand *koku* can be moved from one end of the country to the other and still, formally, have exactly what he had before. The shogunate used this constantly. Transfer — *tenpō*, *kunigae* — was a routine instrument, and its effect over the first half-century was to redraw the map: the third shogun attainted twenty-nine outside lords and twenty of the Tokugawa kin and hereditary vassals, concentrated in Kyūshū, the Chūgoku region and Shikoku — that is, in the west; hereditary vassals were massed in eastern Kyūshū and, after the Shimabara rising, in the

west of the island as well, while Tokugawa kin were placed through the Chūgoku and Shikoku regions, so that by the end of that reign the placement of Tokugawa-line houses extended across the whole country, twenty-two of the kin and a hundred and fifty-one of the hereditary vassals in all.

The revocation was not theoretical either. From the settlement after Sekigahara to 1651, roughly 130 houses were attainted, totalling some twelve million koku; the confiscated ground was either taken into shogunal land or used to seat Tokugawa kin and hereditary vassals, in order to establish the absolute preponderance of shogunal power. Larger counts circulate — one reference gives a hundred and seventy-five outside houses and forty-nine hereditary ones destroyed under the first three shoguns, with over eighteen million *koku* confiscated — and the divergence turns on whether reductions and reassignments are counted alongside outright extinctions; the direction is not in dispute even where the total is.

The commonest ground for destroying a house was not treason. The two great causes were failure of the succession and breach of shogunal law, because deathbed adoption was forbidden and would not be allowed: a lord who died without a living heir already registered lost his house, his family's standing, and the livelihood of every retainer in it, however loyal he had been. This is worth holding in view, because it means the settlement's most destructive instrument was aimed at nobody in particular. It was a rule about paperwork and mortality, and it fell on the careless, the unlucky and the childless.

The bottom of the settlement

The peasant received the mirror image of the lord's position, and the symmetry is exact.

Registration in the cadastre made a man a *honbyakushō*: entered in the survey register as holding fields and a house-plot, bearing the annual land tax and the labour services, and participating in the government of the village — as against the *mizunomi*, who held no registered land and worked others' fields or hired out by the day. The register conferred something real. A registered holding was secure and heritable in a way that nothing had been secure in the previous century, and the household that held it had a recognised standing that the state itself had an interest in protecting.

It protected that standing by making the holding unsaleable. After the great famine of 1642, in which impoverished households sold their fields to richer neighbours and sank into tenancy, the shogunate issued in 1643 a prohibition on the permanent sale of arable land — one clause among seventeen articles addressed to the intendants — intended to prevent the collapse of the registered-peasant order and the loss of the

households on which the tax rested. It kept nominal force until it was abolished in 1872. Thirty years later a further order forbade subdivision of a holding below a stated minimum, on the reasoning that partition among heirs would fragment the tax base into units too small to bear it.

The word to hold on to is *nominal*. Land was in practice bought and sold throughout the period by way of pledge and forfeiture, and from the middle of the era the shogunate did not prosecute breaches unless somebody complained. The prohibition appears to have been aimed at the shogunal lands, and several domains — Mito, Wakayama, Kanazawa, Hiroshima, Morioka among them — permitted sale outright; the penalties were relaxed in 1744. So the peasant settlement is a legal fiction that everyone including the government worked around for two centuries, and it should be named as one — while noting, because this is the harder half of the discipline, that a fiction nobody enforces still shapes conduct. A man who cannot sell his land openly borrows against it instead, on terms set by the neighbour who can afford to lend, and ends by working ground he still legally holds. The prohibition did not prevent dispossession. It changed its paperwork, and moved the resulting relationship out of the register and into the pawnshop, where the state could not see it and did not have to count it.

What was owed

Every grant in this settlement carried consideration, and the Field Manual's diagnostic question — did it include armed service — has an unambiguous answer here. It did, in full, on a published schedule, with a lord assessed at a hundred thousand *koku* owing a stated body of over two thousand men on summons.

But military service was the cheaper half of the bill. The heavier half was construction. The shogunate ordered the daimyō of the whole country to perform public works — castles above all, but also roads and river engineering — allocating the task in divided portions among many houses at once, with the cost of materials and of labour borne by each lord; the practice is understood to have been aimed at exhausting the daimyō's financial strength. In the first phase, while Hideyoshi's heir still sat at Osaka and many lords owed his house a debt of gratitude, Ieyasu used these works to reduce the resources of exactly those men and to display the authority of the new government. Edo — the castle, the moats, the filled inlet, the canals, the city — was built by the compelled labour and at the expense of the lords who would have had to be beaten in a war otherwise.

That is an unusual consideration, and it is worth naming precisely: the Tokugawa grant is simultaneously a payment and an invoice. The lord is enriched and then

required to spend the enrichment on the government's works, on a schedule the government sets, in a place the government chooses. A man kept permanently at the edge of his means by the cost of his own dignity is not a man assembling a war chest.

Does each man defend the whole by defending himself?

Run the chain, because the answer changes as you go down it and the changes are the finding.

The Tokugawa house: obviously yes. The kin houses and the hereditary vassals: yes, and doubly, since they held the offices as well as the land, and their positions had no existence outside the arrangement. The great outside lords: yes, but for a colder reason — they had been enriched, placed far from the capital, stripped of their surplus castles, forbidden to combine, and they held their revenue by a title the government reissued. Their calculation was not gratitude. It was that the arrangement paid them well, that defection required allies they were legally prevented from acquiring, and that the alternative to the arrangement was the century their grandfathers had lived through.

Below the lord, his own retainers held sub-grants on the same terms from him, which reproduced the identical structure one level down and made every domain internally self-defending. The village headman collected the tax, sat in the register, and held his standing from the same paper. The merchant financed all of them and was outside the settlement entirely — which will matter enormously later and does not matter yet.

And then the break, which is sharp and is not at the bottom. The *rōnin* — the masterless warriors produced when a house was destroyed — had a position in this settlement that can be stated exactly: none. They were formed as warriors, legally barred from becoming farmers or merchants by the status law of 1591, and their livelihood had been extinguished by an administrative act against a lord many of them had served faithfully. The arrangement gave them nothing, and its collapse would cost them nothing. They are the one link in the chain where the answer to the default question is no.

The consequence follows without any interpretive effort. Every episode of large-scale organised violence the order faced in its first half-century was made substantially of these men: the defence of Osaka in 1614–15, the rising at Shimabara in 1637–38, and the conspiracy of 1651. Traditional accounts put the number of masterless warriors in the country in the hundreds of thousands — one widely repeated figure is close to half a million, which should be treated as a round number of uncertain provenance rather than a count — and the point does not depend on the precision.

What the shogunate then did is the most instructive fact in this module. After the plot of 1651 was uncovered — its motive generally held to have been resentment at the government's treatment of the masterless — the shogunate acted to relieve them and, in order to reduce the attainders that were producing them, relaxed the prohibition on deathbed adoption. The single most effective instrument of daimyō control in the settlement was deliberately blunted, forty years in, because it had been manufacturing the order's only real enemy at a rate the order could no longer absorb.

Reading the settlement against the framework

Three returns, and the second is the one that revises an existing claim.

First, the corpus needs a fourth settlement fiction, and Japan supplies it. The three families the framework carries — declaring land vacant, declaring a grantee already the owner, declaring a collective holding partible — all convert in the same direction: toward alienable individual property, whether to dispossess, to bind an elite by making them proprietors, or to manufacture a market. The Tokugawa settlement converts the other way, at both ends of the hierarchy simultaneously. The lord's possession, which had rested on conquest and capacity, becomes a delegation from an office, re-granted in writing at every succession. The cultivator's holding, which had rested on presence and use, becomes a registered, heritable, legally unsaleable tenure. Nobody is dispossessed. No market is created — one is closed. Call the family **investiture**: declare that what the holder has, he holds *from* an office, and re-issue the title periodically so that the re-issue becomes the title. Its job is disarming an elite without expropriating it, and immobilising a population without evicting it. It is reached for where the conqueror wants neither the ground nor a land market, but the permanent ability to move people, and its diagnostic tell is unmistakable and appears nowhere else: **the periodic mass reconfirmation of holdings that nobody is challenging.** An order that had truly granted ownership would have no reason to issue eighteen hundred and thirty documents in two years confirming everyone in what they already had.

There is a corollary about the manual's other question — whether the prior form was a thing or a relation between persons. In Japan it was plainly a relation: layered shares in a field, each held by a named party against other named parties. But the conversion did not turn the relation into a thing. It turned the relation into an **office** — an entry in a register carrying a liability and a status, at the lord's level and at the peasant's alike. The binary of relation-into-thing is one case of a wider move, and the corpus should carry both: a conqueror converting a relation may be making property, or he may be making posts.

Second, and this amends a standing claim: a licence can manufacture defenders, and the variable is the counterfactual. The collection holds that what a man conveys by force alone is a licence — revocable by the granter's death, insurable by nobody — and that a licence manufactures no defenders, because its holder has nothing to lose by the arrangement's collapse that he was not going to lose anyway; only ownership, resting on a warrant outside the granter's arm, produces the reflexive defence that separates an order from an army. Tokugawa Japan is a licence order by every criterion in that description. The daimyō held at pleasure, were reconfirmed at each succession, and were destroyed by the hundred in the first fifty years. And it produced the most reliable default in the corpus: two and a half centuries in which not one lord revolted.

The claim is not wrong, but it under-specifies. Two conditions convert a licence into something that behaves like ownership in the holder's own ledger. The first is **reliability of renewal**: a permission that has been renewed at every joint for fifteen generations is, in the calculation of the man holding it, an inheritance, whatever the law says — and note that attainders fell away sharply after the first half-century, so that the outside lords settled permanently into their territories and the licence became, in practice, secure exactly as the regime matured. The second is **the quality of the alternative**. The corpus's argument assumes that a licence-holder loses nothing by collapse; that is true where the alternative to the licence is neutral. Where the alternative is the war the licence ended — and where the order took care that everybody remembered it — the licence-holder loses a very great deal, and defends it accordingly. The amendment to carry forward: **the default a settlement generates is proportional not to the security of the title but to the gap between the title and the holder's realistic alternative**, and a revocable grant in a country with a living memory of general war can out-perform a secure freehold in a country without one.

Third, an instrument aimed at an elite can manufacture the order's actual enemy, and the order may have to blunt the instrument. The prohibition on deathbed adoption was superb daimyō control: it destroyed houses at no political cost, on grounds nobody could call tyranny, and it transferred their land to the centre. Its by-product was a large population of men trained to arms, forbidden by law to take up any other trade, and holding nothing. The settlement seated far fewer claimants than it had formed, the country had been sealed so that the surplus could not be exported, and the pressure therefore discharged inward — at Osaka, at Shimabara, and in the plot of 1651 — until the government repriced by weakening its own best tool. This is the study's first hard test of the proposition that an order with no frontier must either reprice or accumulate pressure until something gives, and at this stage the proposition

holds: there was no outlet, the pressure built for fifty years, and the apex chose to reprice. Whether it kept choosing to is a question for the later modules, and the answer is not yet in.

A note on sources. This module rests chiefly on Japanese reference scholarship and on the drafting record, paraphrased, with technical terms given in the original. The mass reconfirmation of 1664–65 — the simultaneous issue of domain grants and vermilion-seal letters to all daimyō in 1664 and to the court nobility and religious houses in 1665, the total of 1,830 documents, the named commissioners, the resulting compilation used thereafter as the shogunate's basic reference, and the figure of 224 daimyō houses assessed together at 17,814,200-odd *koku* — follows the standard encyclopaedia treatments (Heibonsha's *Sekai daihyakka jiten* and Yamakawa's *Nihonshi shōjiten*) and the Japanese Wikipedia article, which reproduces a specimen grant and schedule. The distinction between the signed grant for houses above a hundred thousand *koku* and the sealed letter below it, the attached territorial schedule, and the practice of *tsugime ando* at each shogunal succession are from the same reference literature and from a documentary-archives commentary on surviving vermilion-seal letters.

The chronology of issue — that Ieyasu as shogun made almost no domain grants to daimyō, that Hidetada made none during the Keichō era, and that the first came in Genna 3 (1617), the year after Ieyasu's death — is from Fujii Jōji's lecture on shogunal domain grants published by the Fukui Prefectural Archives, and is the single load-bearing point in this module that rests on one scholar's reconstruction rather than on general agreement; it should be checked by anyone building further on it.

Attainder and transfer figures are given as ranges because the counts differ on what they include. The Japanese Wikipedia treatment gives roughly 130 houses attainted between the Sekigahara settlement and 1651, totalling some twelve million *koku*; a popular reference gives 175 outside and 49 hereditary houses under the first three shoguns and over 18.47 million *koku*, which appears to count reductions and reassignments alongside extinctions and should not be set beside the first figure as though comparable. The third shogun's twenty-nine outside and twenty kin-and-hereditary attainders, their western concentration, and the cumulative placement of twenty-two kin and a hundred and fifty-one hereditary houses are from the *Sekai daihyakka jiten* article on domain transfer by Fujino Tamotsu. The traditional figure of nearly half a million masterless warriors is repeated in the popular literature without a stated basis and is flagged here as unverified.

On the peasant settlement: the prohibition on permanent sale of arable land of 1643 is one clause within a seventeen-article instruction to the intendants, issued after the Kan'ei famine of 1642, and remained nominally in force until 1872; the evidence

that it was evaded throughout by pledge and forfeiture, that several named domains permitted sale outright, that enforcement lapsed absent complaint, and that penalties were relaxed in 1744, is from the standard reference accounts. The subdivision limit of 1673 is given here without its numerical threshold, because the only figure this study encountered was garbled in its source and has not been verified against a reliable one. The definition of the registered peasant by entry in the cadastral register, and the contrast with the landless, follow the standard treatments. The account of the public-works levies — cost of materials and labour borne by the daimyō, allocation in divided portions, and the understood aim of draining their finances — is from the Japanese Wikipedia article and a castle-reference site, both reporting the settled view; the specific claim about intent is given as the literature gives it, as an understanding rather than a documented statement of purpose. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

The God Who Had Already Lost

Module 3 · The Robe — the itemised bill a man paid for legitimacy he did not need, and what each entry reveals about the audience he thought he had: a title rented from a bankrupt throne, a divine name chosen by checking whose god had just failed, a shrine that consumed a fifth of an inheritance, and a foreign embassy walked the length of the country past other men's castles

In the summer of 1615 Tokugawa Ieyasu had no living enemy. The last rival house had been burned out of its fortress, its heir and its eight-year-old grandson killed, its founder's tomb levelled and the shrine where he had been worshipped as a god dismantled. Every surplus castle in Japan was coming down. The lords were assembled, disarmed of their spare fortifications, forbidden to marry or combine without permission, and made informers on one another. The succession had been performed ten years earlier and obeyed. There was no metropolitan parliament to satisfy, no distant taxpayer funding the operation, no foreign power whose recognition he required to trade, and no church that could excommunicate him.

He was seventy-two years old and he spent the last months of his life, and his heirs spent the next twenty years and an extraordinary quantity of money, buying legitimacy.

That is the fact this module exists to explain, and the framework's sharpest instrument is exactly suited to it. Where an apex that already holds uncontested force pays a real and avoidable price for legitimacy it does not structurally need, the expenditure itself is the evidence — better evidence than anything the apex says about its own motives — that some audience required it. So the method here is to itemise the bill. Each entry is a cost that could have been declined at no risk, and each therefore names a party the men at the top believed they could not do without.

The answer the itemisation produces can be stated in advance, because it organises everything that follows. Ieyasu's problem after 1615 was not that anyone could defeat him. It was that nothing in the arithmetic of force made him a *different kind of thing* from the men he ruled. He commanded more soldiers than any daimyō and fewer than all of them together. He held more land than any house and less than the rest combined. His family had been obscure Mikawa gentry four generations earlier, and half the men now bowing to him could remember when the Matsudaira were nobody. Force can establish that a man is the largest of a set. It cannot establish that he belongs to a different set — and a supremacy of degree invites the arithmetic to be re-run in

every generation, which is precisely the arithmetic the previous century had consisted of. Everything on the bill below is a purchase of difference in kind.

Entry one: a title from a house with no soldiers, and a law to bind the giver

The shogunal appointment of 1603 has already been described. What matters here is what came with it and what came after it.

In the seventh month of 1615, ten days after the laws for the military houses were read at Fushimi, the same drafter produced a second code. The Regulations for the Imperial Court and Court Nobility were drafted at Ieyasu's order by the monk Ishin Sūden and promulgated at Nijō Castle on the seventeenth day of the seventh month of Genna 1 — 9 September 1615 — under the joint signature of three men in this order: the former regent Nijō Akizane, the shogun Hidetada, and the retired Ieyasu. Seventeen articles in classical Chinese.

Read the signature order first, because it is the whole relationship in one line. The courtier signs above the shogun and above the man who had destroyed the Toyotomi four months earlier. A government that had just demonstrated it could kill anyone in Japan arranged for its regulation of the throne to be signed first by a court official, so that the instrument would read as something the court had agreed to rather than something done to it.

Then the content. The first article reads 天子諸芸能之事、第一御学問也 — of the accomplishments proper to the Son of Heaven, the first is learning — followed, the article continues, by Japanese poetry, and the diligent study of these is what is required. A monarch is here given a curriculum. The remaining articles fix precedence among the great ministers and the princes; regulate appointment to and retirement from the regency and require that men without ability shall not hold it whatever their birth; provide that the offices and ranks held by warrior houses shall be separate from those of the court nobility; require that era names be selected from auspicious Chinese precedents; regulate dress, promotion, penalties, monastic appointments, the grant of the purple robe, and the conferral of the title of holy man; and close with the words that this is to be observed.

Two features of this document are more revealing than its clauses.

The first is that the office of warrior rank was deliberately split off from the court's own establishment. That is an administrative detail with a large consequence: it meant the shogunate could distribute court titles to daimyō as a currency of precedence

without those titles consuming positions the courtiers wanted. The mint was to keep working, and the shogunate was to control the issue.

The second is the comparison with the code issued ten days earlier. The laws for the military houses, which were the basic instrument of daimyō control, were revised repeatedly; the court code was never amended at all, and remained unchanged to the end of the shogunate. A law that must go on working against a live counterparty gets rewritten as the counterparty adapts. A law that is never touched in two and a half centuries has either fixed its object permanently or was never really aimed at behaviour in the first place. This one was aimed at a definition, and definitions do not need updating.

And the crucial thing about all of it: none of it was necessary. The court had no soldiers, no revenue it did not receive from the shogunate, and no ally in Japan. It could have been ignored into irrelevance, or abolished, at a cost of nothing.

Entry two: what he paid the court, and what he bought with a granddaughter

Instead of abolishing it he funded it. The court's estates were restored and its ceremonies underwritten, and the shogunate took over the maintenance of an aristocracy that had spent the previous century selling calligraphy to eat. And then Hidetada married his daughter Kazuko into the imperial house as consort to the emperor Go-Mizunoo. Go-Mizunoo favoured her, and in 1623 she bore his first imperial daughter, Princess Okiko — the future Empress Meishō, who was thus Ieyasu's great-granddaughter and the third shogun's niece, a child in whose person the blood of both apexes of the country met.

Consider what has been purchased. A military government that could have dissolved the imperial institution at will instead spent decades and a daughter placing Tokugawa blood inside it. There is no defensive reading of this. Nobody was threatening. The expenditure is pure acquisition, and what it acquired was a relation of kinship to the one family in Japan whose standing did not derive from having won a battle.

Entry three: the god chosen by checking whose god had lost

Ieyasu died in the fourth month of 1616, and the argument about what he was to become began immediately. It is the single most revealing episode in this module.

Two of his closest advisers took opposite positions, and the positions corresponded to two rival Shinto traditions. The Yoshida school, which held the gods superior to the

buddhas, accordingly prized the title Myōjin — Great Illuminating Deity — above the title Gongen, and it was under Yoshida auspices that Toyotomi Hideyoshi had been enshrined after his death as Toyokuni Daimyōjin. Sūden argued for the Myōjin title and for Yoshida rites. Against him, Tenkai of Kan'ei-ji in Edo claimed that Ieyasu had received the Tendai Sannō Ichijitsu teaching in his lifetime and had left instructions to be worshipped in that manner — and argued further that the Myōjin title carried the ill omen of the fall of the Toyokuni Shrine. Tenkai pressed the Gongen title and the Sannō rites through, and in 1617 the divine name Tōshō Daigongen was settled on.

Set that beside the framework's own motto and the resemblance is not accidental. Two liturgies were available. One of them had, within living memory, been used to deify a ruler whose house was then annihilated, whose shrine had been pulled down by the men now deliberating, and whose grave had been destroyed. The argument that carried the day was that this title had a bad record. They chose the god by looking at which god had recently lost.

It would be lazy to read that as cynicism, and the reading would also be wrong. Tenkai made his case in the idiom of omen, and there is no reason to think either man was insincere about the metaphysics; men who believe in efficacious titles are exactly the men who would notice that one had failed. But whatever was in either man's mind, the *decision procedure* on the page is the empirical one: a doctrine was selected on the evidence of a recent test it had not survived. An apex that treats its own sacred apparatus as a thing capable of failing is holding that apparatus as tested rather than revealed — and this apex had watched one fail, in public, and had helped pull it down.

Note also who conferred the divine name. It was granted by the emperor. Even apotheosis had to be issued from Kyoto.

Entry four: five hundred and sixty-eight thousand pieces of gold

The shrine built at Nikkō in 1617 to receive the body was, on the dead man's own instructions, a modest affair. What stands there now is his grandson's.

From 1634 the third shogun, Iemitsu, undertook the Kan'ei rebuilding. The cost was 568,000 ryō of gold, 100 kan of silver and 1,000 koku of rice; the labour amounted to 1,683,000 carpenters and craftsmen alone and something like 4,530,000 workers in all; and the work was completed in a year and five months, timed to the twenty-first anniversary of Ieyasu's death in 1636. It is said that about a fifth of the inheritance Iemitsu received from his father went into it. Modern currency equivalents are offered in the popular literature ranging from four billion to a hundred billion yen and are worth nothing except as an indication that the sum was enormous; a regional education authority describes the project as having been undertaken with cost disregarded.

This is the largest single avoidable expenditure in the module and it demands the sharpest version of the question. Nobody was rebelling in 1634. What was it for?

The answer is visible in what the shrine was then used for. The shogunal progresses to Nikkō became major state occasions; the daimyō contributed; an annual cycle of observances bound the hereditary Tokugawa vassals and the branch houses into the worship of a common ancestor who was also a god. The house acquired, at a cost it could afford exactly once, something a settlement of revocable land grants cannot generate on its own: a reason for its servants to hold their positions as sacred duties rather than as a good arrangement. A licence is defended while it pays. A cult is defended because of what one is.

Entry five: the doctrine, and a caution about when it arrived

The standard picture has the Tokugawa order running from its foundation on a state Neo-Confucian orthodoxy — a hierarchy of ruler and subject, father and son, presented as the structure of nature itself, with the four-status order as its social expression. The patronage is real enough. Hayashi Razan entered Ieyasu's service in 1607, built a Confucian temple at Ueno with Tokugawa support in 1630, began an officially sponsored national history in 1644 intended to legitimate the political authority and morality of the warrior government, and after his death the post of Confucian adviser to the shogun became hereditary in his family.

But the date at which any of this became *orthodoxy* is the fact the standard picture gets wrong, and it matters. Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism was formally adopted as the official orthodox teaching only in 1790, under the Kansei Edict, and the Hayashi school became a state-run institution under shogunal control in 1797. And the reason it was adopted then is the revealing part: Matsudaira Sadanobu, head of the council of elders, promulgated the Prohibition of Heterodox Studies in 1790 because he was aware of and concerned over the decline of fidelity to Neo-Confucian teaching in the shogunate's own college.

So an exclusive doctrine was proclaimed a hundred and seventy-five years into the order's life, by a reformer, because the doctrine was losing ground inside the government's own academy. That is not the founding robe. That is a late repair, and it belongs to the study of the order's decline rather than its construction. For the first century and three-quarters the shogunate ran with a patronised school, a hereditary house of scholars, and no enforced creed — which is itself a finding worth stating plainly: **this apex bought its doctrine late, cheaply, and in response to failure, having built everything else first.** The early robe was not doctrinal at all. It was genealogical, ritual and ceremonial.

Entry six: foreigners, walked the length of the country

The last entry is the one most easily mistaken for foreign policy.

Korean embassies were dispatched by the king of Chosŏn to the Tokugawa shogunate between 1609 and 1811. Entering from northern Kyūshū by way of Tsushima, the delegations travelled to Edo to meet the shogun, staying some days in Kyoto on the way, where the emperor and the court nobility resided. The scholarship on this is settled and its conclusion is the one this module needs: immediately after establishing the military government, inviting the Korean embassy was one of the most important undertakings of the shogunate, demonstrating to other samurai families that the Tokugawa house was the strongest political authority in the country. Ronald Toby's study of the subject, which reoriented the field, treats the diplomatic order under a heading that says the same thing more precisely — recognition as a lens, diplomacy in the legitimation of the shogunate — and argues that far from being a sealed country, Tokugawa Japan ran a foreign policy that established the shogunate's legitimacy, preserved security in an unstable environment, and supported Japan's claim to centrality in an East Asian order of its own.

Twelve missions over two centuries, each an enormous logistical and financial undertaking, each walked overland through the domains of lords who lined the roads to watch a foreign king's ambassadors travelling to do honour to the shogun — and passing, on the way, through the city where the emperor lived without stopping to do the same for him. Processions of Ryūkyūan envoys served the same function and were depicted in popular prints. The audience was never the Koreans.

The bill comes due: the purple robes

Renting an authority has a cost the renter cannot see at the outset: the thing rented has to stay real, which means the lessor has to be kept in existence, and a lessor whose only asset is the power to confer retains, permanently, the power to withhold. That bill was presented in 1627.

The shogunate had established in 1613 a rule requiring that imperial grants of the purple robe — the vestment marking a senior cleric — be notified to it, and the court code of 1615 covered the same ground. Go-Mizunoo nevertheless continued the customary practice and granted the robe to more than ten priests without consulting the shogunate. In 1627 the third shogun treated the absence of prior consultation as a breach of the code, declared many of the grants void, and ordered the Kyoto deputy Itakura Shigemune to confiscate the robes. The court opposed the invalidation strongly, and the senior clerics of the great monasteries — Takuan Sōhō of Daitoku-ji

and Tōgen Etō of Myōshin-ji among them — submitted written protests siding with the court. In 1629 the shogunate exiled the protesting priests to Dewa and Mutsu.

An attempt at repair made it worse: in the tenth month of 1629 Iemitsu's wet-nurse was received in audience by the emperor and granted the name Kasuga, and the dispatch of a woman holding no court rank at all deepened the court's resentment rather than easing it. A month later the emperor used the only instrument he had. On the eighth day of the eleventh month of 1629 Go-Mizunoo abdicated in favour of his second daughter, Princess Okiko, without giving the shogunate any notice whatever. She succeeded at seven years old — the first reigning empress in 859 years, since the eighth century — and she was, as the shogunate could hardly overlook, Hidetada's granddaughter, so that the abdication simultaneously insulted the government and handed it the thing its marriage policy had been buying.

What happened next is the part the textbook summary omits. In 1632, on the death of the retired shogun Hidetada, a general amnesty released those punished in the affair. Of the exiled priests, Takuan came into Iemitsu's favour and attended on him closely, and pressed for the restoration of the monasteries' old rights; and in 1641 Iemitsu formally restored the old temple regulations at Daitoku-ji and Myōshin-ji and returned the confiscated purple robes.

Fourteen years. The shogunate won the principle absolutely — after 1629 no emperor attempted political action again until the 1850s — and gave back, piece by piece, nearly everything the principle had been asserted over. Both halves are the finding. The court could not resist and could not be commanded; its one weapon was the withdrawal of its own service, which it used, at real cost to the government's dignity and timetable; and the government discovered, by absorbing it, that the worst the court could do was survivable. Each side learned the shape of the other's power, and the shape held for two hundred years.

Reading the robe against the framework

Four returns.

First, an answer to the question this module was set: force ranks by degree, and a robe is what buys difference in kind. The revealed-preference test asks what an apex pays for that it need not, and infers the audience. Run it here and every entry points the same way, but the *reason* is structural rather than a matter of audience alone. The Tokugawa supremacy was quantitative — the largest holding, the largest army, the best position — among a set of two hundred houses that were the same kind of thing. Nothing about being the biggest warlord makes one cease to be a warlord, and a purely quantitative supremacy invites recalculation every generation, which was the content

of the century just ended. Court rank, divine name, ancestral cult and foreign recognition all do the identical work: they move the holder into a different category, where the arithmetic of relative strength does not reach. The proposition to carry into other cases: **where an apex's position rests on being the largest of a set of like things, expect heavy and continuing expenditure on legitimacy precisely at the height of its power, because force cannot manufacture a difference of kind and that is the commodity it is short of.** The corollary predicts the inverse case — a conqueror arriving from outside already differs in kind from the conquered and should be expected to buy less, which is roughly what the colonial cases in this collection show.

Second, a third audience type, and the corpus should name it. The collection's colonial studies found the robe cut away from the ruled and toward the metropole whose taxpayers funded the conquest and whose soldiers fought it. Japan has no metropole and no distant public; the peasantry are held by the floor and are not asked to believe anything in particular; and no foreign power's opinion constrains the shogunate materially. Every item on this bill is addressed instead to **the coordinating class itself and to the ruling house's own servants** — the court rank that lets one armed man outrank another without a battle, the embassy paraded past the daimyō's own roads, the ancestor cult that converts hereditary vassals into worshippers, and, when it finally arrives, a doctrine taught at a college for officials. Add it to the two the corpus already carries: a robe may face the ruled, or face the distant funder, or face inward at the men who operate the machine.

Third, a rented warrant obliges the renter to maintain the lessor, and the lessor's residual power is refusal. This is the mechanism the purple-robe affair exposes and it generalises. An apex that borrows legitimacy from an institution it could destroy has bought a permanent liability along with the asset: the institution must be kept alive, funded, and credible, or the currency it mints becomes worthless. And an institution in that position — powerless in every respect except that it alone can confer — retains exactly one weapon, the withholding of the service, which costs it nothing to use because it has nothing else to lose. Go-Mizunoo's abdication is the purest instance of it in the corpus. **Where a study finds an apex renting authority from a disarmed source, it should look for the strike, and should expect the apex to answer it not by force, which cannot restore a voluntary act, but by concession over a period long enough that the concession does not look like one.** Fourteen years is what that looked like here.

Fourth, and the sharpest: this apex chose its own theology by revealed preference, on the evidence of a recent failure. The dispute over Ieyasu's divine name was settled by the argument that the rival title carried the ill omen of the Toyokuni

Shrine's fall — that is, that the last man deified under that formula had had his house extinguished and his shrine pulled down. Whatever the participants believed about the gods, the decision rule they applied was empirical: a doctrine was rejected because it had been tested and had not held. This collection insists that a robe becoming real does not make it a lie, and equally that the men at the top of an order handle their own legitimating apparatus with the practical eye of people who know it is apparatus. Here is a case where both are visible in one deliberation, and it suggests a diagnostic worth applying elsewhere: **at a founding, look for the moment when the new order's sacred forms are selected rather than inherited, because the criteria used in that selection are the closest thing to a statement of what the founders thought the sacred was for.** The Tokugawa thought it was for lasting, and they picked accordingly.

A note on sources. The primary text quoted here is the first article of the Regulations for the Imperial Court and Court Nobility of 1615 — 天子諸芸能之事、第一御学問也 — given in the original with this study's own translation, from the standard Japanese encyclopaedia treatments; the summary of the remaining sixteen articles follows a Kyoto reference compilation and the same encyclopaedia entries. The circumstances of promulgation — Sūden's drafting at Ieyasu's order, the date of the seventeenth day of the seventh month of Genna 1, the place at Nijō Castle, the joint signature of Nijō Akizane, Hidetada and Ieyasu in that order, the form of seventeen articles in classical Chinese, and the fact that the code was never once amended thereafter while the laws for the military houses were revised repeatedly — are from the Japanese Wikipedia article and from the Heibonsha and Shōgakukan reference entries, which agree.

The dispute over the divine name follows the *Sekai daihyakka jiten* entry on Tōshō Daigongen: the Yoshida school's preference for the Myōjin title and its use for Hideyoshi as Toyokuni Daimyōjin; Sūden's advocacy of Myōjin and Yoshida rites against Tenkai's advocacy of the Gongen title and the Sannō Ichijitsu rites; Tenkai's claim that Ieyasu had received that teaching in life and had so instructed; his argument from the ill omen of the Toyokuni Shrine's fall; and the settlement on Tōshō Daigongen in 1617. Some accounts name the Yoshida house priest Bonshun alongside Sūden on the Myōjin side; that detail has not been verified here and is omitted.

The Nikkō figures — 568,000 *ryō* of gold, 100 *kan* of silver, 1,000 *koku* of rice, roughly 1,683,000 craftsmen and about 4,530,000 workers in total, completion in a year and five months for the twenty-first anniversary in 1636 — are as given in the Japanese popular and regional-education literature on the shrine, which is consistent across several accounts but is not scholarly; the claim that the works consumed about a fifth of Iemitsu's inheritance, and the modern-currency equivalents ranging from four

billion to a hundred billion yen, should be treated as illustrative rather than as figures. A separate regional source gives the total as about a million *ryō*, and the divergence is not resolved here.

The Purple Robe affair follows the Japanese Wikipedia article and a chronology compiled from it: the notification rule of 1613, Go-Mizunoo's grants to more than ten priests, the shogunate's invalidation in 1627 and the order to Itakura Shigemune, the protests of Takuan Sōhō and Tōgen Etō, the exiles to Dewa and Mutsu in 1629, the Kasuga audience of the tenth month of 1629, the abdication of the eighth day of the eleventh month without notice, the amnesty of 1632 on Hidetada's death, and Iemitsu's formal restoration of the monasteries' rights and return of the robes in 1641. The figure of 859 years since the last reigning empress is as given in the Japanese literature and depends on which eighth-century reign is counted from.

On Neo-Confucianism the module deliberately departs from the textbook account. Hayashi Razan's entry into service in 1607, the Ueno temple of 1630, the officially sponsored history begun in 1644, and the hereditary Confucian advisership are standard. The dating of formal orthodoxy to the Kansei Prohibition of Heterodox Studies of 1790 and the conversion of the Hayashi school into a state institution in 1797, and Matsudaira Sadanobu's stated motive of declining fidelity within the shogunate's own college, are from the reference literature; the wider revisionist argument that the picture of an early state ideology is a retrojection is associated with Herman Ooms, Kate Wildman Nakai and Watanabe Hiroshi, whose work is known here at second hand through the secondary literature and has not been read directly for this module. A reader building on this point should go to them.

On the embassies, the periodisation 1609–1811, the route by Tsushima and Kyoto to Edo, and the finding that the missions demonstrated to other samurai houses that the Tokugawa were the strongest authority in the country, are from a recent article in *Monumenta Nipponica*'s field; the wider argument is Ronald P. Toby's *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan* (1984), whose chapter on diplomacy in the legitimation of the shogunate is cited here from its table of contents and from summaries of its argument rather than from the text itself. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

The Law Nobody Issued

Module 4 · Formation — installing the belief each generation: how the most quoted instrument of peasant instruction in Japanese history turns out to have no original and no author, how the most totalising institution the order ever operated was never ordered into existence, and what fills a seat that cannot be left empty

There is no unformed person. A child arrives with the disposition to defer to marked authority, to hold with the group whose belonging he cannot do without, to fence certain commitments off from calculation, and to take his picture of the world in the form of a story — and all four are installed by whoever is nearest before the vigilance that might screen them has finished growing. The dispositions are not defects; they are the equipment by which a creature that cannot verify anything for itself manages to know a great deal. So the question a study of formation asks is never whether a population was formed, but *who occupied the position*, with what material, from what age.

The Tokugawa order had made that question unusually urgent for itself. Having abolished movement between statuses by law and immobilised holdings at both ends of the hierarchy, it needed every person in the country to want, or at least not seriously to question, the particular place he had been assigned and could not leave. An order in that position must either police continuously or install the arrangement early enough that it stops looking like an arrangement.

What follows is an account of how it did that. The account has an unusual shape, because the two instruments the standard picture puts at the centre turn out, on inspection, to be a document nobody ever issued and an institution nobody ever ordered.

The document with no original

Every general history of the period quotes the Keian Injunctions. Thirty-two articles, dated the twenty-sixth day of the second month of Keian 2 — 7 April 1649 — telling the peasantry how to live in the most extraordinary detail: rise early and cut grass, work the fields by day and weave straw by night, eat coarse grain and not rice, watch the drinking of tea and the smoking of tobacco, honour the headman as a

parent, and pay the tax before anything else. It has served for a century as the single best evidence of what the shogunate wanted a peasant to be.

No original has ever been found. Nowhere in Japan has a copy issued in 1649 turned up. Enomoto Sōji observed in 1959 that the text appears only in a compilation of 1835, and is absent from the collection of shogunal edicts assembled under the eighth shogun and from the early-seventeenth-century compilation of house ordinances; and that if it had been transmitted to the villages, headmen's document collections should hold it, and not one instance has been reported.

The reconstruction that has largely replaced the old account is Yamamoto Eiji's, and it is more interesting than a simple exposure. Yamamoto argues against reading the text as a later fabrication or forgery while rejecting the 1649 promulgation, and identifies its original in a domain document of 1697 — the *Notes on the Conduct of Peasants*, a thirty-two-article text apparently enacted by the Kōfu Tokugawa house, preserved in the Naitō family of Kai province, which is itself said to derive from an untitled booklet of thirty-five articles dated 1665 in the Tsuchiya family of Shinano. From there it travelled by the ordinary routes of an instructional genre: five of the eighteen articles in a peasant instruction distributed by the Kurobane domain in 1758 are quoted from a text in that lineage, and the Iwamura domain printed and distributed related material in the 1830s, the woodblock edition of 1830 being the source whose ancestry is at issue. One reconstruction places its national diffusion against the innovation, tried under Matsudaira Sadanobu, of distributing law to town and village as printed matter, at a time when the countryside was in distress after famine and its restoration was a policy question — so that a text called the Keian Injunctions was circulated in print across the country and taken up without its authenticity being doubted. The view now approaching consensus is that this was not an official law promulgated nationally by the shogunate in 1649, and textbooks have accordingly dropped it or hedged it.

Two findings come out of this and both matter more than the correction itself.

The first is about the order. The state did far less direct instruction of its commoners than the textbook picture supposes. The minute regulation of the peasant's diet, dress, hours and pleasures — the passage everyone quotes — is not a founding programme issued from Edo at the height of the settlement. It is a genre of local and domanial moral instruction that grew up in the provinces over the second half of the period, largely in response to rural impoverishment, and was distributed by lords and reformers who had their own reasons for wanting the peasantry frugal. The shogunate's actual formative footprint on the commoner is much lighter than the famous document implies, and this reframes everything else in the module.

The second is about formation itself, and it is a positive mechanism rather than an absence. A local instruction of recent origin acquired national authority by being attributed to the founding generation — and the attribution did work the instruction could never have done alone. Advice from one's own domain office in the 1790s is advice. The same words dated 1649 and issued in the name of the third shogun are the ancestral order of things, the arrangement as it has always been, the thing one's great-grandparents lived under. The backdating converts a policy into a patrimony. It worked so thoroughly that it persuaded not only the villages but the historians, and it stood in the textbooks for a century after the last man who could have received it was dead.

The institution nobody ordered

The other pillar of the standard picture is the temple registration system, and its history is the exact opposite: a real, universal, annually renewed institution that no law ever established.

It grew, step by step, out of the suppression of Christianity. The shogunate first relied on the trampling of images and on rewards for informers; then created the practice of having Buddhist temples guarantee that a person was not a Christian. After the Shimabara rising of 1637–38, the office of religious inspector was established in 1640. In 1638 the temples of the country were ordered to issue certificates. In 1664 the domains were ordered to appoint inspectors and to conduct the inspection annually; in 1665 to compile registers; and from 1671 to remake them every year.

And then the sentence that makes this module's argument. No law ever directly commanded the parishioner system into being. What happened is that in 1671 the shogunate directed that the religious inspection, already being conducted, should be carried out by means of the existing population registers — and with that the compilation of combined religious and population registers became institutionalised, and the temple-parishioner relation came into existence as a system.

What the merger produced touched every person in the country. The register was compiled annually by the headman of each village or ward: names and ages by household, together with the temple to which the household belonged as parishioners, and it functioned in practice as a civil register. When a person left the locality to marry or to enter service, a temple certificate had to be raised and an entry made in the register at the destination. Once the register system was established the parish relation was fixed, and changing one's temple or one's sect was in principle no longer permitted. Those who fell off the register altogether became persons without a domicile, and suffered accordingly. Two copies were made each year, one submitted to the lord, one kept in the village.

Nobody designed this. An intelligence problem — how to find adherents of a banned foreign religion — was solved by making the local temple vouch for people. A fiscal and policing problem — how to know who lives where — was solved by counting households. In 1671 an official noticed that the two operations were being run over the same population and combined them for convenience, and the result was a compulsory religious affiliation, renewed every year, from which no legal existence was possible outside. The most totalising formative institution in the order arrived as an administrative economy.

Note precisely what it did and did not install. It enforced *affiliation*, not belief: nobody was examined on doctrine, and the register asked which temple, not what one held. What the parish relation actually formed was the household's relation to its own dead — funerals, memorial services, the ancestral tablets, the annual return of the ancestors — which is a formation in lineage continuity rather than in creed. A man raised inside it learned, without being taught it as a doctrine, that he was a link in a house that preceded and would outlast him, that his standing was his household's standing, and that both were written down.

Who actually taught the children

Three institutions, catching three kinds of child at roughly the same age.

The warrior's son went to the domain school. What he was to become is stated in one line of the founding law, the first article of the code read to the assembled lords in 1615: letters on the left and arms on the right, both to be possessed together, and in order one does not forget disorder. That is a curriculum and a self-understanding at once — a man defined by a readiness he will never use, whose worth is in his house's service rather than his own achievement, and whose training is a form of remembrance.

The commoner's child went, if he went, to a *terakoya*. These were private and unregulated, held in the homes of samurai, Buddhist priests, or commoners; they concentrated on reading and writing but extended to the abacus, history and geography, and taught girls sewing, tea, flower arrangement and other arts. In Edo the attendance rate reached seventy per cent by the turn of the nineteenth century. Nobody licensed them and nobody set their curriculum. They spread because parents wanted them.

And the third institution was the household itself, which in a merchant or artisan family meant the house rules and the apprenticeship — succession, veneration of ancestors, filial piety, honesty, diligence, endurance, contentment, frugality, prudence, harmony, the family name preserved — a list assembled from surviving merchant house codes and remarkably uniform across them.

Here a widely repeated claim needs correcting, because it bears directly on how much formation the state was doing. The picture of a highly literate Tokugawa Japan derives largely from two books published in 1965, by Ronald Dore and Herbert Passin, which relied on records of school attendance to estimate nationwide male and female literacy rates. Richard Rubinger's subsequent work on direct measures — signatures on apostasy oaths, village election ballots, account books, diaries, literacy surveys — revises that picture substantially. He rejects the simple correlation of school attendance with literacy, and finds that many ordinary farmers had only rudimentary skills even in the nineteenth century. He identifies substantial and enduring differences between urban and rural commoners lasting until the eighteenth century, and traces the origins of popular literacy to the village headmen of the early sixteenth century onward — a group extraordinarily skilled in administrative literacy, using the hybrid Sino-Japanese of official documents — with reading and writing spreading outward from them to household heads, particularly in communities involved in commerce, and only later to women, employees and servants.

Read that structurally and it is a finding about the settlement rather than about schools. An order that assesses every field, registers every household, requires a certificate for every movement and a return every year has made a literate man necessary in every village. It manufactured that man because it could not run without him, and reading spread from the desk where the register was kept, outward and downward, over generations. **The paperwork was the literacy programme**, and it was nobody's programme.

The portrait of the good subject, and the one status that was given none

Set the three portraits side by side and the gap is conspicuous.

The warrior has a portrait, stated in law, taught in schools, and rehearsed in a training he will never apply: cultivated, armed, serving, loyal to a house.

The peasant has a portrait — diligent, frugal, early-rising, honest, staying where he is registered, paying before he eats — but it must now be described carefully, because the most famous statement of it is a late instructional text of provincial origin wearing a founding date. The portrait was real and was circulated widely; it simply was not decreed at the founding, and it was pressed hardest by people worried about revenue in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rather than by the men who built the order in the seventeenth.

The merchant has nothing. Merchants were placed at the bottom of the ranking of warrior, peasant, artisan and merchant. The status order told him where he stood and said not one word about what a good specimen of him would look like. There was no state doctrine of honest trade, no school for it, no ritual, no portrait. And the money was accumulating in his hands.

The leak, and which way it ran

The seat could not be left empty, and it was not.

Ishida Baigan, a Kyoto merchant born in 1685, founded the movement known as Shingaku, learning of the heart — a syncretic teaching blending Neo-Confucian, Zen and Shinto elements to promote moral cultivation among commoners. It emphasised the innate goodness of the heart-mind and a practical ethics applicable across the social statuses, addressing itself particularly to the spiritual needs of townspeople in the growing cash economy, and was delivered through accessible lectures and parables positing a single Way of ethical conduct, aiming at egolessness and at contentment in one's daily occupation — without challenging the existing social order. After his death it became a widespread movement under his successor Teshima Toan; the scholarship warns against dismissing it as a facile merchant ethic, and credits it with disseminating moral and religious knowledge on a large scale to the less-educated sectors of the society, by informal transmission rather than institutional schooling. Alongside it, the merchants of Osaka founded and funded their own academy.

Now the finding, and it inverts an expectation this collection has carried from other cases. Where a colonial order withheld formation from its subjects, what grew in the gap was a counter-elite fluent in the ruler's own idiom and eventually turning that idiom back on it. Here the withholding produced the opposite. A merchant, unformed by the state in his capacity as a merchant, built a teaching that dignified commerce as a calling with its own integrity — and the teaching he built ratified the status order rather than attacking it, taught contentment in one's assigned occupation, and was disseminated to hundreds of thousands of commoners at no cost to the government whatever.

The variable that explains the difference is worth naming. The colonial orders that produced counter-elites had *denounced* the excluded — declared them incapable, uncivilised, not yet ready — which is an ideological exclusion, and an ideological exclusion supplies the excluded with a grievance and a vocabulary in the same motion. The Tokugawa order merely *ranked* the merchant low and then ignored him. Silence is not denunciation. A class that has been ranked low without being told it is unworthy

will tend to supply the missing dignity itself, and, having no quarrel to prosecute, will supply it in terms compatible with the arrangement it lives in.

Where the formation was thin, and one place it failed completely

The outcaste categories were formed into their position as thoroughly as anyone and given no route out of it; they are treated in the accounting later in this study, where they belong.

The masterless warriors were formed as warriors and given no place at all, and the order paid for that in the risings of its first fifty years.

And in the villages of western Kyūshū there is a case that settles, better than any argument, what the register system was actually doing. Communities of Christians survived the proscription for seven generations while appearing every year in the religious registers as parishioners of Buddhist temples, in good standing, correctly enrolled. The apparatus that recorded the entire population by name, age, household and sect, annually, for two hundred years, did not detect them — because it was never designed to test belief. It tested affiliation, and affiliation is exactly what a person under compulsion can supply while believing something else. That is the sharpest available evidence that this order's most total institution was a surveillance instrument that had been mistaken, by later observers and perhaps by some of its own officials, for a formative one.

Reading formation against the framework

Four returns.

First, a backdated warrant is a formation technique in its own right, and the corpus should hunt for it. The most quoted instrument of peasant formation in Japanese history is a provincial instructional text of the late seventeenth century, distributed nationally in print a century later, bearing the date of a founding shogun's reign. The attribution did work the content could not: it converted current advice into ancestral order. The diagnostic that follows is cheap to apply and likely to pay off in other cases: **when a study identifies an order's most-cited formative text, check whether that order actually issued it — and if it did not, date the attribution and ask who was served by making it.** Here the answer is that it was made late, in a period of rural distress and administrative reform, by men who wanted the founding generation's authority behind their own remedies. An order in decline reaches backward for a founding it can no longer perform.

Second, the most totalising formative institution in this order was never designed, and the corpus has probably been looking for founding decrees where it should be looking for mergers. The temple registration was not established by any law. An anti-Christian security measure and a household census were run over the same population, an official combined them in 1671 for administrative economy, and the by-product was universal compulsory religious affiliation, annually renewed, for two centuries, with no legal existence available outside it. This is position logic in its purest form — each step solved the problem actually in front of somebody, and nobody wanted or foresaw the sum. **Where a study finds a formative apparatus of extraordinary reach, it should look not for the decree that created it but for the two separate administrative problems whose solutions were merged.**

Third, an order that taxes by register manufactures a literate stratum whether it intends to or not, and popular literacy grows outward from that function. The revision of the old literacy estimates matters less as a correction than as a mechanism. Reading and writing entered the Japanese village through the headman, who needed the hybrid official language to keep the register, raise the certificate and file the return that the settlement required of him; and it spread from that desk to household heads, to commercial families, and eventually to women and servants, over generations, without a state programme. The proposition to carry: **administrative literacy precedes and produces popular literacy**, so an order's fiscal instrument is also, unintentionally, its educational one — and the channel it opens is the channel through which everything later travels, including things it would not have chosen to send.

Fourth, and the amendment: a withheld portrait is filled from below, and what fills it may stabilise the order rather than threaten it. This collection's colonial cases established that formation withheld from a subject population produces a counter-elite fluent in the ruler's idiom. Japan supplies the control that the proposition needed. The merchant class was excluded from the order's formative provision as completely as any colonial subject, was accumulating the country's money, and produced — from inside itself, at its own expense — a teaching that dignified its work, spread it to hundreds of thousands of commoners, and endorsed the status order that had ranked it last. The variable is not whether formation was withheld but **how**: an order that *denounces* the excluded hands them a grievance and a vocabulary at once, while an order that merely *ranks* them low and then says nothing leaves a vacancy that the excluded will fill on terms compatible with their own position in the arrangement. Withheld formation is a risk. Contemptuous formation is the risk.

A note on sources. The Keian Injunctions material follows the Japanese reference and scholarly literature, paraphrased. The absence of any original, the text's appearance

only in a compilation of 1835 and its absence from the shogunal edict collections compiled under Yoshimune and from the early house-ordinance compilation, and the absence of any village headman's copy, are Enomoto Sōji's objections of 1959 as reported in the Japanese literature. Yamamoto Eiji's reconstruction — that the text is not a later fabrication but that the 1649 promulgation must be rejected, and that its original is the thirty-two-article *Hyakushō mimochi no oboegaki* of Genroku 10 (1697), apparently enacted by the Kōfu Tokugawa house and preserved in the Naitō family of Kai, itself deriving from an untitled thirty-five-article booklet of 1665 in the Tsuchiya family of Shinano — is given as the Japanese Wikipedia article and a university wiki report it, together with the transmission evidence (five of eighteen articles in the Kurobane domain's 1758 peasant instruction quoted from that lineage; the Iwamura domain's printing and distribution in the 1830s). Yamamoto's *Keian no furegaki wa dasareta ka* (Yamakawa, 2002) has not been read directly for this module and is known through the publisher's summary, reader reports and the reference literature; the associated hypothesis about diffusion by printed distribution in the reform period is from a reader's summary of that book and should be treated as reported rather than established. Maruyama Yasunari's rival derivation from a 1782 intendant's compilation is noted in the same source and not adjudicated here. The consensus statement that the text was not a shogunal law of 1649, and that textbooks have altered their treatment accordingly, is from the Japanese secondary literature.

The religious registration material follows the *Sekai daihyakka jiten* and Yamakawa reference entries and the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the religious inspection, the combined registers, the temple-certificate system and the parish system, which agree on the sequence: the prohibition of 1613, the order to temples of 1638, the office of inspector in 1640, the instruction to the domains in 1664, the order to compile registers in 1665, and the legal organisation with annual renewal from 1671. The statement that no law directly commanded the parish system into existence, and that it was institutionalised as a consequence of the 1671 instruction to conduct the inspection by means of the population registers, is from the *Sekai daihyakka jiten* entry by Ōkuwa Hitoshi. The details of annual compilation by the headman, the two copies, the contents, the certificate required for movement, the prohibition on changing temple or sect, and the position of those omitted from the register are from the same body of reference material.

On education and literacy: the description of the *terakoya* as private, unregulated and variously housed, and the Edo attendance figure of about seventy per cent at the turn of the nineteenth century, are as the reference literature gives them and rest on the same attendance records that Rubinger's critique addresses; they are reported here as

attendance and not as literacy. Richard Rubinger's *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Hawai'i, 2007) is known here through the publisher's description, a review summary and a subsequent survey article, not read directly; the findings attributed to him — the rejection of the attendance-to-literacy inference, the persistence of merely rudimentary skills among many nineteenth-century farmers, the enduring urban–rural divergence to the eighteenth century, and the origin of popular literacy in the administrative literacy of village headmen — are as those summaries report them, and a reader building on the structural argument this module draws from them should go to the book. Ronald Dore's *Education in Tokugawa Japan* and Herbert Passin's *Society and Education in Japan*, both 1965, are identified as the source of the older nationwide estimates on the same secondhand basis.

On Shingaku: Ishida Baigan's dates (1685–1744), his origin as a Kyoto merchant, the syncretic character of the teaching, its emphasis on the innate goodness of the heart-mind and on a single Way applicable across statuses, its address to townspeople in a cash economy, its delivery by lectures and parables, its aim at contentment in one's occupation, and its explicit non-challenge to the social order, are from the reference literature. Janine Anderson Sawada's *Confucian Values and Popular Zen* is cited from the publisher's description for two points only: that the movement expanded greatly under Teshima Toan, and that reading it as a facile merchant ethic understates its religious content. Robert Bellah's *Tokugawa Religion* (1957) stands behind much of the older Anglophone treatment and is noted rather than relied upon. The list of merchant house-code virtues is as reported in a recent study of the mercantile ethical tradition, at second hand.

The hidden Christian communities of western Kyūshū are described here from general knowledge of a well-established body of scholarship, without a specific citation, and the inference drawn from them — that the register tested affiliation rather than belief — is this study's own and is offered as an argument rather than as a reported finding. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

Not to Be Seen by Any but the Magistrates

Module 5 · The Cost Column — why the ordinary subject's ledger came out against revolt: a penal code kept secret while its punishments were displayed on boards, three hundred officers for the largest city on earth, a tax assessed on the village and then never measured again, and a door bolted against the wrong people

A study of compliance that opens with the instruments of coercion has already decided its answer. The honest procedure is to ask first what the arrangement actually gave the person, because a ledger has two columns and the interesting cases are the ones where both are full.

For most of the Tokugawa population the benefit was substantial and it was not abstract. The century before the settlement had consisted of armies crossing fields at harvest, requisition without recourse, villages burned in other men's quarrels, women taken, and the ordinary experience — attested across the whole Sengoku record — of a countryside where the strong took what they liked because nobody could stop them. After the 1610s that ended, and it stayed ended for two hundred and fifty years. Whatever else is said in this module, that is the first entry in the benefit column and it is enormous.

The second is a registered, heritable holding that could not be taken by force and could not, in law, be sold away in a bad year. The third is a village that ran its own internal affairs — allocated its own tax burden, managed its own commons, settled its own disputes, and dealt with authority as a body rather than as a crowd of individuals. The fourth is that this was a period of sustained agricultural improvement and population growth, of new land brought under cultivation, of commercial crops and better techniques, and of cities that became among the largest in the world, with a commoner culture of theatre, print and pleasure that no peasantry in the previous century could have imagined having access to.

So the question is not why a crushed population failed to rise. It is the sharper one: given a real benefit and a real cost, why did the sum come out where it did, for each of several very different kinds of person?

The tax, and the reason it fell

Begin with the extraction, because it is the largest recurring cost and because its structure explains most of what follows.

The first fact is that the tax was not levied on a person. The annual land tax was assessed on the village, not the individual: for a village assessed at four hundred koku at a rate of five parts to the lord and five to the people, two hundred koku of hulled rice were owed. Near harvest an allocation letter arrived from the intendant's office stating the amount, its composition and the date due, signed and sealed; on the basis of it the village officers — headman, group heads and the peasants' representative — met and spent several days deciding what each household would bear.

Read that carefully. The state issued a number to a corporate body and the corporate body decided who paid what. The shogunate and the domains, at the point where extraction actually touches a human being, were not present in the room.

The second fact is the rate, and here the standard figures mislead in a specific and important direction. The conventional expressions — four parts to the lord and six to the people, or five and five — are stated as proportions of the assessed yield, and the actual rate varied by soil, harvest and region. But the assessed yield is not the harvest. The village assessment was fixed, in most villages, by the surveys of the Kanbun and Genroku eras; new land clearance was largely complete by then, and thereafter villages increased their wealth by shifting into high-value crops and better methods — with the result that village wealth grew while the assessed figure on which the tax was calculated did not, so that the shogunate progressively became less able to take its share. Estimates of the effective burden accordingly run far below the nominal rate, one commonly repeated figure putting it under thirty per cent of actual product; those estimates should be treated as approximations, but the direction is not in doubt.

The third fact is that the rate was negotiated and had a disaster clause. The older practice of sending inspectors to assess each year's crop was expensive for the office and burdensome for the village, so a fixed-term assessment came in, set from the average of past years and running for five or ten years, at the end of which the peasants themselves petitioned for a new term. Where flood or drought caused damage above thirty per cent the fixed term was suspended and the year assessed by inspection instead. That a fixed amount was agreed in advance and yet not collected when the peasants could not stand it indicates a kind of contract between warrior and peasant, decisively unlike the modern collection that followed the land-tax reform.

Put the three together and the extraction has a shape the framework recognises but with one setting reversed. It is a tax on a flow, tuned, with a corporate counterparty that negotiates and a formal remission when the crop fails — the "just enough"

arrangement, held near but not at the threshold. What is unusual is the drift. The equilibrium did not hold steady and it did not creep upward. It fell, steadily, for two centuries, because the instrument that measured the base had been frozen while the base grew, and nobody ever decided to reduce anything.

The village as the second enforcer, working for nothing

The collective assessment is one half of an arrangement whose other half is collective liability.

Households were bound into groups of five, jointly responsible for one another's conduct, obliged to report wrongdoing among themselves and answerable if they did not. The village as a whole stood behind the tax: if a household could not pay, the village made up the difference. And the village held the ultimate social sanction in its own hands — the withdrawal of all cooperation from an offending household except in fire and in burial, which in a settlement where nobody could farm alone was a punishment more feared than most the magistrate could impose.

The effect on the state's ledger is the point. Every one of these mechanisms transfers enforcement from the government to the neighbours, and it does so on the strongest possible incentive, because the neighbour is not doing the state a favour — he pays personally if his neighbour defaults or absconds. A man contemplating flight, concealment of yield, or a breach of the rules is not weighing the probability that a distant official will notice. He is weighing the certainty that the four families whose names are bound to his own will notice immediately, and will act, because his failure is billed to them.

How thin the floor actually was

This matters because the alternative was not available. The Tokugawa state could not have policed its population directly, and the figures for its greatest city make the point beyond argument.

The southern and northern town magistrates' offices in Edo were each staffed with twenty-five mounted officers and a hundred constables, and between them handled the judicial, administrative and police functions of the city. Of these, the constables who actually performed police work — the regular patrol, the special patrol and the plain-clothes patrol — numbered, across both offices together, fewer than thirty; maintaining order in a city whose population reached a million was accordingly difficult, and the offices lent staves to hired subordinates while the constables privately employed informants of their own. The whole establishment was about three hundred people,

and with those three hundred the magistrates' offices administered Edo and kept its peace.

Three hundred officials, of whom under thirty walked a beat, for the largest city in the world. There is no reading of that number on which the Tokugawa order held its population down by the direct application of force. Whatever was holding it, it was not manpower.

The code nobody could read and the punishment everybody could see

Part of the answer is a piece of institutional design that is almost too neat.

The Kujikata Osadamegaki, the shogunate's basic legal code, was compiled under the eighth shogun in two volumes — eighty-one basic ordinances on policing and punishment in the upper, and in the lower a hundred and three articles abstracting the old case law into criminal provisions, known as the Hundred Articles. It is dated to 1742 but revision continued and the text was finally fixed in 1754. Its colophon reads 奉行中之外不可有他見者也 — this is not to be seen by any save the magistrates. Only the three magistrates, the Kyoto deputy and the Osaka castellan could see it: a secret code, enacted but never promulgated.

And yet the population was not left guessing about consequences. Public notice boards stated what was forbidden, and at every execution a placard was set up in the street giving the criminal's name, age and offence. The rule was concealed; the penalty was advertised.

That combination is not an inconsistency, and it is exactly what an order with three hundred policemen would want. A subject who knows the rule can calculate his exposure, discount it by the low probability of detection, and act. A subject who knows only that men are crucified for things — and can read, on a board at the crossroads, precisely who was crucified last week and for what — cannot calculate anything, and in the absence of a calculation he overestimates. Concealing the schedule while displaying the outcomes is the cheapest deterrent per officer that a state can buy.

It bought something else as well. With a few exceptions the penalties the code prescribed struck the officials themselves as heavy, and the judicial records show throughout a disposition to avoid the death penalty where possible; but the officers could hardly say openly that provisions the shogun himself had helped draft were wrong, and since the text was frozen after 1754 and thereafter fitted the circumstances ever less well, they treated its provisions as a baseline and worked to find grounds and reasoning for mitigation. A hidden and severe schedule, applied by officials looking for

reasons to reduce it, produces mercy that arrives as a gift rather than as a right — which generates gratitude in the recipient where a published tariff would have generated only compliance.

The exit dial, and a correction

The standard picture, and the working hypothesis this study began with, is that the Tokugawa order closed exit by law and policed movement tightly through its barrier stations. Tested against the sources, that is substantially wrong about the ordinary subject, and the correction is one of the more useful findings in the module.

The barriers were real and the penalties for evading them were severe. But their purpose is stated flatly in the phrase by which they were known — guns going in, women coming out. The barriers policed firearms being brought into Edo, and women leaving it, in order to prevent the wives and daughters of the daimyō, held in Edo as hostages, from escaping to their home domains. Guns required a permit issued by the council of elders; women required a permit issued by the shogunal warden. Breaking a barrier was a grave crime and those who attempted it, or assisted, faced crucifixion and similar punishments — though the same account notes that passage by bribery was common. The women's permit was extraordinarily detailed: issued by four to six wardens in Edo Castle, it recorded the traveller's identity, purpose, destination, hairstyle, and the distinguishing features of her face, hands and feet, and if the description did not match she did not pass.

And then the sentence that overturns the received account: ordinary male travellers required no barrier permit at all. Some carried a certificate issued by their headman or their lord, in order to avoid the nuisance of examination, but it was not required of them.

The apparatus everyone cites as the instrument of popular immobilisation was aimed at the hostage system that held the daimyō, not at the peasantry. Commoner travel — pilgrimage, medicinal springs, trade, visiting — was extensive and, in the ordinary case, unlicensed.

So the exit dial was not set where it was supposed to be, and the real answer is elsewhere. What held a man in place was the register. The annual religious and population register, compiled in each village by the headman, recorded every household by name and age with the temple to which it belonged, and functioned in practice as the civil register; leaving the locality to marry or to enter service required a temple certificate to be raised and an entry made at the destination. Those who fell out of the register became persons of no fixed domicile and suffered the disabilities of that condition.

That is the trap and it should be named exactly. It is not a wall and not a garrison. It is a book, kept in a man's own village, by his own neighbours, listing him by name, age, household and temple, remade every year. To go without it was not to be pursued; it was to cease to have a legal existence — unable to marry, to take service, to hold land, or to be buried. The order did not need to guard the exits, because it had made the exits lead nowhere.

Two further settings complete the picture and they run in opposite directions. Externally the door was bolted absolutely: from the 1630s no Japanese subject could leave the country, and none who had left could return, on pain of death. Internally the door stood wide open. The cities were growing, they needed labour continuously, and a second or third son with no prospect of a holding could walk to Edo or Osaka and find work — with paperwork if he was prudent, without it if he was not, and the *chōnin* population of the great cities was substantially made of such people. The state's tax instrument, built to assess paddy fields, could not follow him there.

The channel, and what it cost to use

An order with a full cost column and a thin benefit needs surveillance. An order with both columns full needs something else: a way for grievance to leave the system without breaking it.

There were two. The first was lawful and collective: in 1740 villages of Settsu combined to bring suit against fertiliser merchants, in what is taken as the beginning of the collective provincial suit — a genuine litigation channel through which village federations pursued economic grievances against merchants and, sometimes, against officials.

The second was the direct appeal over the head of one's lord, and the story the peasantry told about it is more informative than the law. Sakura Sōgorō, headman of a village in Shimōsa, is the best known of the righteous men. In the account, the lord of Sakura imposed heavy new taxes and the people were reduced to destitution; the headmen of the whole domain petitioned the district magistrate and the chief retainer and were refused; they went to Edo and petitioned at the domain residence and were refused; six representatives intercepted a councillor's palanquin and were refused; and so Sōgorō alone intercepted the shogun's palanquin. The appeal was granted and the people of the domain were saved. Sōgorō and his wife were crucified and their four sons put to death. The same account is candid that little of this can be confirmed as history, and that the legend was formed in the later Tokugawa period and spread through popular narrative, storytelling and the theatre.

The legend's unhistoricity is not a problem for this module; it is the module's evidence. What circulated among the peasantry — in the theatres, in the recitations, at the shrine raised to the man — was a story in which the channel *works* and the user *dies*. Consider what a population holding that belief will do. It will not conclude that appeal is futile, because in the story the appeal succeeds. It will conclude that appeal is real, effective, and appallingly expensive — which routes grievance into the channel rather than into a rising, and simultaneously guarantees that only a genuinely desperate community will pay the entry price. No government could have designed that belief. It happens to be almost exactly the belief a government would want.

The ledger, run separately

The population was not one thing and the sums do not come out the same.

The registered peasant. Real holding, real security, real village standing, a burden that declined across the period, a negotiated rate with a failure clause, and a lawful channel of complaint. His costs are the collective liability, the immobility, and the fact that everything he has is held on terms set by men he did not choose. His ledger comes out against revolt by a wide margin, and it comes out that way for reasons that are largely honest.

The landless. No entry in the register in his own right, working another man's fields or hiring by the day, and — as the pledge-and-forfeiture trade advanced through the eighteenth century — increasingly numerous. His benefit is thinner and his security is his creditor's goodwill. He is the man who walks to the city, and large numbers did.

The townsman. The best position in the order for anyone below a warrior. The land tax fell on fields, and the urban commoner was largely outside it; he was governed by his own ward organisation, made money in a growing economy, and had access to a commercial culture of theatre, publishing and pleasure that the status hierarchy notionally placed him beneath but which he in fact owned. That the merchant was ranked last and lived best is the standing joke of the period's own literature, and it is not a joke about hypocrisy — it is an accurate description of a status order that had ceased to track the distribution of anything.

Those sold. Indenture into service was legal and common, and the sale of daughters into brothel service was a recognised transaction that famine reliably increased. This is the hardest single entry in the module and it should not be softened: a substantial traffic in human beings, mostly female, mostly rural, mostly driven by household debt, operated lawfully throughout the period.

Women. Bound within the household by law and by formation, unable to initiate divorce in the ordinary case, and — uniquely among the population — the specific

target of the barrier system. The one legally recognised exit was the refuge temple, at which a woman who reached the gate could obtain a severance her husband could not refuse.

The outcaste categories. Formed into their position from birth, marked in residence, occupation and dress, excluded from the ordinary registers' status, and given no route out at any price. Here the cost column is full, the benefit column is nearly empty, and the compliance is held by force and by the fact that there is nowhere in Japan such a person could go and be anything else. Any claim about Tokugawa mildness that does not carry this population in the same sentence is not describing the order.

The periphery. North of the Tsugaru Strait the arrangement was different in kind — a single house holding a monopoly of trade with a people who were not subjects, a contract-fishery system that turned that monopoly into compulsory labour, and a ledger with almost nothing in the benefit column at all. That is a separate case and this collection treats it separately; it belongs here only as the reminder that the Tokugawa order looked entirely unlike itself at its edge.

Reading the cost column against the framework

Four returns.

First, the two dials need a third setting, because exit can be shut outward and open inward, and the combination stabilises rather than crushes. The framework's expectation is that where every door is closed extraction sinks toward the biological minimum. Japan closed the outer door as completely as any order in the corpus — no departure, no return, on pain of death, for two centuries — and the extraction *fell*. The reason is that the inner door was wide. Surplus population could walk to a city and enter an economy the land tax could not reach, and the cities took them by the hundred thousand. **An untaxed internal sector performs the function of a frontier without any territory being acquired**, absorbing exactly the pressure a frontier absorbs, and a study that scores exit as a single open-or-shut variable will misread every order that has one. Note too what this does to the frontier proposition this study is testing: the Tokugawa order did have an outlet, it simply was not geographic, and that is why the pressure took so long to find the apex.

Second, a frozen measuring instrument is a concession nobody granted, and this order was running two of them in opposite directions at once. The village assessment was fixed in the late seventeenth century and largely never redone, so that as product grew the effective rate declined for two hundred years without any decision, negotiation, or consent. That is the peasant's slow and unlegislated tax cut.

Simultaneously the warrior's stipend was fixed in rice while the price of everything he bought moved, which is the same mechanism running the other way and impoverishing him by arithmetic. **An order that fixes nominal quantities and then stops re-measuring has delegated its distributive politics to the passage of time** — and here one accounting habit, applied to two classes, produced both of the order's defining long-run trends: a peasantry growing quietly richer against its assessment and a warrior class growing quietly poorer against its stipend. Neither was anybody's policy. Both were somebody's decision not to re-survey.

Third, a secret code with public punishment is the cheapest deterrent available, and a thin enforcement establishment is its diagnostic tell. Three hundred officials, under thirty of them on patrol, for a million people, with a penal code that no subject was permitted to read and a placard at every execution naming the man and his offence. The subject cannot compute his exposure and therefore overestimates it; the official retains discretion and dispenses mercy as favour. **Where a study finds an order policing a very large population with a very small establishment, it should look for concealment of the rule alongside display of the consequence**, and should expect to find that the apparent leniency in the records is officials working downward from a schedule they found excessive.

Fourth, and the structural finding: this state did not meet its subjects. The tax was issued to the village and divided by the village. The register was kept by the village. The surveillance was by the five-family group. The heaviest routine sanction was ostracism by the neighbours. At the point where the order touched a human being, the thing touching him was almost always other people in the same position as himself, whose interest in his compliance was direct and personal because they were billed for his failure. The state's own credibility therefore had to reach only as far as the village *as a unit* — it never had to be credible against each of thirty million people, only against thirty thousand corporate bodies each of which policed itself for nothing. **Where an order deals exclusively through corporate intermediaries, the individual's cost column is filled by his neighbours rather than by the state, and the force required at the centre collapses accordingly.** That, and not the sword, is what three hundred men in Edo were sitting on top of.

A note on sources. This module rests chiefly on Japanese reference scholarship, paraphrased, with technical terms and one primary phrase given in the original. The colophon of the Kujikata Osadamegaki — 奉行中之外不可有他見者也 — is quoted from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the code, which also supplies its structure (eighty-one ordinances in the upper volume, a hundred and three articles in the lower, known as the Hundred Articles), its compilation under Matsudaira Norisato

with the three magistrates, its nominal date of 1742 and final fixing in 1754. The restriction of access to the three magistrates, the Kyoto deputy and the Osaka castellan, and the practice of public notice boards and of the placard erected at executions naming the criminal, age and offence, are from a Japanese popular-history account and should be treated as the settled general picture rather than as archivally verified here. The observation that officials found the penalties heavy, sought grounds for mitigation, and treated the frozen text as a baseline to work down from, is from a published interview with Wani Kaya of Waseda University on the legal history of the period.

The Edo policing figures — twenty-five mounted officers and a hundred constables in each of the two magistrates' offices, fewer than thirty patrol constables across both, the explicit statement that this was inadequate for a city approaching a million, the lending of staves to hired subordinates and the private employment of informants, and the summary figure of about three hundred officials — are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the constables and from a *President Online* article by a historian of the magistracy. Later increases (to a hundred and twenty and then a hundred and forty constables per office, and an establishment of about two hundred and eighty by the 1850s) are noted in those sources and do not alter the order of magnitude.

On taxation: the village-level assessment, the allocation letter, and the multi-day meeting of village officers to divide the burden are from a municipal library's local-history page summarising standard scholarship. The conventional rate expressions and the caution that actual rates varied by soil, harvest and region are from the *Nihon daihyakka zensho* entry. The argument that village assessments were fixed by the Kanbun–Genroku surveys and thereafter not revised while village wealth grew, and the description of the fixed-term assessment with its petition cycle and its suspension on damage above thirty per cent as a kind of contract, are from a detailed answer on a Japanese public forum which reproduces the standard scholarly account; that provenance is weaker than this module would prefer for a load-bearing point, and a reader building on the effective-rate argument should verify it against the specialist literature on the *jōmen* system. The frequently cited effective figure of under thirty per cent is reported in the same context and is given here as an approximation.

On movement: the barrier system's purpose, the permits for firearms and for women, the issuing authorities, and the severity of penalties for evasion are from the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the barrier policy and the women's permit, and from a Keiō University archive exhibition note and the Hakone Barrier museum's own materials, which supply the detail of the physical description recorded on a woman's permit. The statement that ordinary male travellers required no barrier permit — the correction on which this module's exit argument turns — is from the *Sekai daihyakka*

jiten entry on barrier permits by Watanabe Kazutoshi. The function of the annual register and the disabilities of those omitted from it are as established in the previous module.

The collective suit of 1740 is from a chronology attached to a Japanese encyclopaedia entry on the legal code. The Sakura Sōgorō material — the sequence of refused petitions, the interception of the shogun's palanquin, the granting of the appeal, and the crucifixion of Sōgorō and his wife with the execution of their four sons — is from the Japanese Wikipedia article, which states plainly that little can be confirmed as history, that the legend was formed in the later Tokugawa period and spread by popular narrative and theatre, and that the sources disagree on the date and on which shogun was petitioned. This module relies on the legend as evidence of what was believed, not as an account of what happened, and the distinction is load-bearing.

The five-family groups, village collective liability, ostracism, the recognised refuge temples for women, the traffic in indentured and sold persons, and the position of the outcaste categories are described here from the general scholarship without specific citation; the outcaste and peripheral material is treated properly in the accounting module later in this study and in the collection's separate treatment of the northern frontier. Figures for the incidence of peasant risings across the period exist in the Japanese literature and are deliberately not given here, because the compilations differ substantially in what they count as a rising and this module has not verified any of them. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

Rice Not Yet Harvested

Module 6 · Extraction — following the surplus from the paddy to the paper: a tax taken in kind from villages, converted into bills for ten koku apiece covering grain not yet shipped and grain not yet grown, traded in the world's first licensed futures exchange, and arriving at last in the storehouses of the men the order had ranked last

The first question is quickly settled. Nothing here was taken as a stock. No population was cleared off ground wanted for settlers; the cultivator was needed alive, in place, and producing, and the order's whole legal architecture was built to keep him there. What was taken was a share of an annual harvest, at a rate that could be turned up or down, from a producer the extractor could not do without.

So this is extraction as a rate on a flow, and the model that applies is the one about equilibrium. The previous module established where the equilibrium actually sat and why: assessed on the village rather than the person, negotiated for fixed terms that the village itself petitioned to renew, suspended when the crop failed badly, and calculated against a base figure fixed in the late seventeenth century and thereafter left unrevised while the actual product grew. The nominal rate of forty or fifty per cent of assessed yield therefore describes a smaller and smaller share of real output across two centuries.

That settles the rate. It does not answer the question this module exists to answer, which is where the take *went*.

The medium-of-payment test, and the surprise it produces

The framework's sharpest instrument on extraction asks not the rate but what will be accepted in satisfaction of it — because a levy payable only in the ruler's coin, imposed on a household that lives by subsistence and holds no coin, is not revenue but a labour draft with the compulsion moved out of the statute and into the household's arithmetic.

Run it here and the first result is negative. The Japanese land tax was payable in the crop. A household delivered hulled rice from the paddy portion of its holding and money only on the dry-field and house-plot portion, and the rice it delivered was the thing it already grew. Nobody was pushed into a labour market by the medium of payment. On this test the Tokugawa land tax is revenue in about the purest form the record offers.

And then the test produces its real result, which is that the compulsion it was built to detect is present — one level up.

A lord assessed at two hundred thousand *koku* could not eat two hundred thousand *koku* of rice. He had a residence to keep in Edo and a procession to move between it and his domain, retainers to pay, construction levies to meet, silk and lacquer and paper and salt and interest to buy, and none of it was purchasable in grain. He was therefore obliged, every single year, to convert nearly the whole of his revenue into money — in a market he did not control, at a price he did not set, through intermediaries he did not employ.

The person forced into the market by the medium of payment was not the taxpayer. It was the extractor. That is the finding this module turns on, and everything below follows from it.

The conversion machine

The apparatus that performed that conversion was concentrated at Osaka and it was, by any measure, the most sophisticated financial institution anywhere in the world at the time.

Most of the rice the domains collected as tax was shipped to the great cities. The domains delivered it into warehouse compounds around Nakanoshima and sold it to licensed rice brokers by competitive tender; the successful bidder received a rice bill, a security promising exchange for ten koku of rice per sheet. These bills came to include rice not yet arrived and rice yet to be harvested, and were actively traded. Two kinds of dealing went on: spot dealing in the physical rice, and book dealing, which was futures trading. Participants needed only to put up a deposit of silver as margin, and could trade forward with settlement in the price difference — an arrangement possessing, in outline, the essential machinery of a modern futures market.

The market had grown up in front of the shop of the great Osaka merchant house of Yodoya around the 1660s, moved to the newly developed Dōjima ground in 1697, and the shogunate spent the following three decades trying to place its control in the hands of Edo merchants through a succession of licensed offices, against which the Osaka rice dealers repeatedly and vigorously petitioned. In the eighth month of 1730 the shogunate gave way, recognised the operation of the Dōjima market by the Osaka merchants themselves, and licensed futures dealing at the same time. The licence was issued in the name of Ōoka Tadasuke, and with it came delivery months, the margin system, standardised representative grades and cash settlement — organised as a chartered, membership-based market with clearing. The Chicago Board of Trade was founded in 1848, a hundred and eighteen years later.

The price formed at Dōjima was carried to Edo and the provincial cities by courier and by flag-signalling relay, and became the reference price for rice everywhere in the country.

Now state plainly what that means for this study. The income of every warrior in Japan — the shogun, the two hundred lords, and the hundreds of thousands of retainers paid in rice — was denominated in a commodity whose price was discovered in a trading room in Osaka, by merchants, under a charter those merchants had obtained by petitioning against the government's own preferred arrangement. No warrior sat in that room. The class that held the monopoly of violence had subcontracted the valuation of its entire revenue to the class it had placed at the bottom of the status order.

At the other end of the country the same relationship ran in miniature and more brutally. In Edo the shogunate's own direct retainers drew stipends in rice from the government granaries and used licensed brokers to collect it, cart it, and sell it, for a commission — and those brokers also lent against the stipend as security, at annual interest of eighteen per cent.

Which way the metal moved

The Japanese scholarship on the currency has a phrase for the resulting structure that says the whole thing in a line. Describing what the recoinage of 1695 changed, it notes that until then the economy had a structure in which gold and silver flowed only one way — out of the shogunate's treasury and into the storehouses of the merchant families.

That is the answer to "follow the surplus." It went from the village to the warrior, and then from the warrior to the merchant, continuously, by price and by interest, for two hundred years. The class that held the floor, the settlement and the robe was not the destination of the take. It was a conduit.

The apex's three answers, all of them expropriations

An order in that position has no ordinary fiscal instrument against the class accumulating its revenue, because it has no tax on commerce worth the name and no legal theory that would justify one. What it has instead is power, and it used power three ways.

Debasement. In 1695, on the proposal of Ogiwara Shigehide, the shogunate recalled the Keichō coinage and reminted it at lower fineness, the gold content of the koban falling from 84.2 to 57.3 per cent, increasing the quantity of coin and taking the

recoinage profit into the treasury. Old coin was exchanged at par with a premium of about one per cent; because the reduction in metal content far exceeded the premium the merchants resisted, and the exchange only proceeded once the shogunate proclaimed the old coin out of circulation. The profit is put at about five million ryō — equal to roughly five years of shogunal expenditure at the time. One figure for the total gain across gold and silver is 5,280,000 ryō and more.

The older account of this as a monetary catastrophe has been revised, and the revision matters for what the measure actually *was*. Murai Atsushi's research estimates inflation over the eleven years following the recoinage at an average of about three per cent nominal, with little great effect on ordinary life, and attributes the sharp rice-price rise of 1695–96 chiefly to a cold summer; while the recoinage did reduce the real purchasing power of the great merchants' and wealthy households' hoards of the old high-fineness coin, so that the merchants, faced with the fall in the value of money, moved from saving into investment — and the one-way flow of metal from the treasury into the merchant storehouses was altered.

Read structurally, that is not primarily a monetary policy. It is a capital levy on the merchant class, assessed on their holdings of good coin, collected without a tax, and narrated as an improvement of the currency.

Confiscation. In 1705 the fifth head of the house of Yodoya — the family in front of whose shop the rice market had begun — was subjected to forfeiture of his entire estate. The record of what was taken gives 120,000 ryō in gold, 125,000 kan of silver (about 2,140,000 ryō in gold equivalent), ten thousand tsubo of houses and twenty thousand of land at Kitahama, besides timber, ships and a large quantity of art. The official ground of the forfeiture was that his luxury exceeded the station proper to a townsman; but the enormous sums he had lent to the daimyō are generally held to have been the real reason. The forfeiture put those assets into the shogunate's hands, and the debts of the domains — which many of them had no prospect of repaying — were extinguished.

The sums attributed to Yodoya's lending to the lords are given in the Japanese literature at figures that cannot be taken literally and are plainly legendary; the confiscated-asset schedule survives in the record and the cancellation of the daimyō debts does not depend on the size of the legend.

Cancellation. By the end of the eighteenth century the shogunate's own bannermen and housemen — the men who were the floor — were so far into the brokers that the government had to intervene directly. The debt-relief edict of the ninth month of 1789 wholly cancelled the brokers' claims arising before 1784, reduced the interest on claims from 1785 onward from eighteen per cent to six with repayment

by instalments, and set twelve per cent for new lending. The brokers lost 1,187,808 ryō and more in claims, and lending to warriors fell into a state of panic. The shogunate then established a new loan office and made public money available to the stricken brokers interest-free or at low interest, bringing their business under its own control. The cancelled sum, across eighty-eight brokers, was approximately equal to the shogunate's annual expenditure.

The sequel is the part worth holding on to. The bannermen's finances did not necessarily improve; brokers' debts were cancelled again in 1843 on an interest-free perpetual-instalment basis, and the interest rate was cut again in 1862; more than half the brokers closed, the money market was thrown into confusion, and the impoverishment of the bannermen and housemen advanced further as a result.

An order that expropriates its creditors to save its soldiers discovers, on the second and third occasions, that it has destroyed the credit its soldiers were living on.

The story told on each instrument

The framework asks for the legitimating story attached to each mechanism, and here the pattern in the stories is more revealing than any one of them.

The land tax was the lord's due, rendered for the peace and the order he maintained — and given the century that preceded the settlement, that was not a difficult case to make and was largely accepted. The construction levies and the post-station labour duty were *service*, owed by station, not payments at all. The recoinage was a technical correction of the currency. The Yodoya forfeiture was a punishment for luxury exceeding the station of a townsman. The debt cancellations were the relief of loyal servants of the shogun.

Now notice what all three of the extractions from the merchant have in common. **Every one of them was narrated as a moral correction of the merchant.** He was hoarding good coin; he was living above his station; he was charging usurious interest to the shogun's own men. The status order that had ranked commerce last supplied, ready-made, the vocabulary in which taking a merchant's property could be described as putting him right. That is what a status ranking is *for*, at the moment when the ranking has stopped describing the distribution of anything: a class ranked at the bottom is a class whose wealth can always be characterised as impudence.

Where the threshold was, and where it was not

The final question the module owes is what happened when extraction crossed the line, and the honest answer requires separating two lines that are usually confused.

The line the framework normally watches — the extractor pushing the producer toward subsistence — was not the operative constraint here, and the reason is the one established in the previous module. The rate was not being held near the revolt threshold by the extractor's judgement. It was being held, and progressively lowered, by an assessment that had stopped being remeasured, a fixed-term contract the village renegotiated, and a remission clause that operated when the harvest failed. **The binding constraint on the rate was the measuring instrument, not the threshold.**

The line that actually broke was a different one, and it broke in the famine years. When the harvest failed across a region — in the 1730s, the 1780s, the 1830s — grain moved toward the cities and the price at Dōjima, because that is what the entire apparatus described above was built to make it do, and people in the countryside and in the poorer quarters of the cities starved while rice was in warehouses within their sight. The characteristic popular violence of those years was the urban smashing, and its target was overwhelmingly the rice dealer and the pawnbroker rather than the magistracy or the castle. That is worth pausing on. A population that attacks the merchant's storehouse rather than the lord's gate has read the distribution correctly. It has identified where the grain went, and its analysis agrees with this module's.

Reading extraction against the framework

Four returns.

First, run the medium-of-payment test on the recipient and not only on the payer. The test as the corpus holds it asks what the taxpayer must do to obtain the medium demanded, and finds the compulsion hidden in his arithmetic. Japan supplies the mirror case: a tax collected in kind, imposing no market compulsion whatever on the household, and imposing total market compulsion on the *collector*, who cannot use what he has taken until he has sold it. The question to add: **what must the extractor do with the thing he has taken before he can spend it, and who stands at that step?** Wherever an order taxes in a commodity and spends in money, it has built a conversion point it does not own, and the party holding that point will end up holding the surplus — regardless of what the law says about anybody's rank.

Second, follow the surplus one stage past the apex. This collection's practice is to trace the take from producer to ruling coalition and stop there, on the reasonable assumption that the coalition is where it lodges. Tokugawa Japan requires a third stage, and requires it for two centuries continuously rather than as a late crisis: village to warrior by tax, warrior to merchant by price and by interest. The class holding all three monopolies was in net terms a conduit. **A ruling class can be the collector of a surplus without being its destination**, and a study that stops at the apex will miss the

most important fact about the order's trajectory — that its rulers were being drained by the ordinary operation of a system they themselves had designed, without anybody defrauding anybody.

Third, where an apex cannot tax a class it will expropriate it episodically, and the status order supplies the licence. Debasement, forfeiture and debt cancellation are the three instruments visible here, and all three were narrated as moral corrections of a class ranked low. The configuration is stable — it ran two hundred years and was not a crisis — but it is not free, and the bill is deferred rather than avoided: each episode teaches the lenders what a claim on this government is worth, so that by the third cancellation the credit market for warriors had substantially closed and the men the measure was meant to rescue were worse off than before it. **Expropriation is a tax that can only be levied a limited number of times, and the count is not visible in the year it is used.**

Fourth, a note back to the modules on the settlement and the cost column, because the three findings assemble into one mechanism. The order fixed the peasant's assessment and stopped measuring; it fixed the warrior's stipend in rice and let the price move; and it placed the conversion of rice into money in merchant hands. Those are three separate administrative decisions, none of them made with any of the others in view, and together they constitute a machine that transferred wealth downward and outward from the ruling class for two centuries at a steady rate, invisibly, with no policy behind it and no author. When the corpus asks why orders decay, this is the kind of answer it should be looking for: not corruption, not luxury, not a failure of will, but **an accounting architecture laid down at the founding whose distributive consequences only become visible after four or five generations**, by which point the men who would have to reverse it are the ones it has impoverished.

A note on sources. This module rests on Japanese reference scholarship and institutional sources, paraphrased, with technical terms given in the original. The Dōjima material — the shipment of tax rice to the cities, the domain warehouse compounds, the sale by competitive tender, the rice bill of ten *koku* per sheet, the inclusion in those bills of rice not yet arrived and not yet harvested, the distinction between spot and book dealing, the margin deposit and difference settlement, the market's origins in front of the Yodoya house, its move to Dōjima in 1697, the shogunate's successive attempts to place it under Edo merchants and the Osaka dealers' petitions against this, and the licensing of the eighth month of 1730 — are from the Japan Exchange Group's own historical page on the Dōjima market, the Japanese Wikipedia article, and the Yamakawa and Heibonsha reference entries, which agree.

The issue of the licence in Ōoka Tadasuke's name and the comparison with the founding of the Chicago Board of Trade in 1848 are from a Japanese financial-history essay and should be treated as the settled popular account of a point that is not in dispute. The transmission of the Dōjima price nationally by courier and flag relay is from the Japan Exchange Group page.

On the recoinage: the reduction of the *koban*'s gold content from 84.2 to 57.3 per cent, the taking of the recoinage profit into the treasury, the exchange at par with a premium of about one per cent, the merchants' resistance, the prohibition of the old coin to force the exchange, and the figure of about five million *ryō* equal to roughly five years of shogunal expenditure, are from a Japanese economic-history essay and a *Nikkei Business* article; the alternative figure of 5,280,000 *ryō* across gold and silver, and Murai Atsushi's revisionist findings on the modest inflation rate, the cold summer of 1695–96, the erosion of merchant hoards and the consequent shift from saving to investment, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on Ogiwara Shigehide. The phrase describing the pre-1695 structure as one in which gold and silver flowed only one way from the shogunal treasury into the merchant storehouses is that article's characterisation and is used here as the scholarship's own formulation of the point this module argues.

On the Yodoya forfeiture: the date of 1705, the forfeiture and expulsion, the stated ground that his luxury exceeded a townsman's station, the schedule of confiscated assets, and the statement that the loans to the daimyō are generally held to have been the true reason, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the house of Yodoya and from the Heibonsha and Britannica Japan reference entries. The figures given in the popular literature for Yodoya's lending to the lords, and the modern-currency conversions attached to them, are legendary and are deliberately not reproduced here. The statement that the forfeiture extinguished the domains' debts is from a Japanese legal-practice historical essay drawing on the Kansai 21st Century Association's compilation, and is reported rather than independently verified.

On the debt-relief edict of 1789: its terms, the loss of 1,187,808 *ryō* and more by the brokers, the panic in warrior lending, the establishment of the Saruyachō loan office and the advance of public money, the further cancellations of 1843 and the rate reduction of 1862, the closure of more than half the brokers, and the consequent further impoverishment of the bannermen and housemen, are from the *Nihon daihyakka zensho* and Yamakawa entries. The figure of eighty-eight brokers and the comparison of the cancelled sum to the shogunate's annual expenditure are from a Japanese educational reference site and should be treated as approximate.

The account of the famine years and of the urban smashings directed at rice dealers and pawnbrokers is given here from the general scholarship without specific citation, and the inference drawn from the choice of target is this study's own. Figures for the incidence and scale of those disturbances are not given, for the same reason they were withheld in the previous module: the compilations differ on what they count, and none has been verified here. The domain monopolies in paper, wax, indigo and sugar, the forced loans levied on merchant houses, and the post-station labour duty are named in this module but not quantified, and belong properly to the accounting module later in this study. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

The Leaf Torn Out

Module 7 · Information and Suppression — a censorship bureau that blacked out the words or removed the whole page, a censorship of books sold to a guild in exchange for a copyright, a classified foreign newsletter delivered once a year to the shogun alone, and a national policy that acquired its name and its existence from a translation made in 1801

Begin with the thing everybody knows about this order, because it turns out not to have existed in the form in which it is known.

There was never an edict closing the country. The word *sakoku* was first used by the Dutch-studies scholar Shizuki Tadao in a work completed in 1801. Engelbert Kaempfer, the German physician who had been in Japan between 1690 and 1692, discussed the country in a systematic account of Asia, and after his death his History of Japan was edited and published in English in 1727; the final chapter of the appendix to the Dutch second edition of 1733 was titled, at length, on the entirely proper reasons for this country's forbidding its own people to leave, forbidding foreigners to enter, and prohibiting intercourse with the nations of the world. Shizuki, a former apprentice Dutch interpreter at Nagasaki, translated that chapter around 1800 and, finding the title too long, looked for a suitable word in his own translation and called the piece On the Closed Country. The word was coined in the act of translating. The book was never printed, circulating only in manuscript among a few readers, and the term did not spread. The expression "sakoku edict" is accordingly a term of art invented by scholars after the Meiji Restoration; no prohibition of any such name was ever issued during the Edo period.

Two further details make the episode sharper still. Kaempfer's chapter was an argument *in favour* of the policy; the Dutch version, retranslated from the English, gave the title the form of a question about whether the policy was right, and Shizuki's rendering carried a critical spirit toward a shogunate which — at a moment when the Russian envoy Laxman had already come to Nemuro seeking trade — was refusing foreign intercourse by holding up "the ancestral law" as a shield. And the ancestral law in question had itself been assembled by misreading. The vessel whose arrival the original prohibition excluded was the galeota, a ship type used for both war and trade, which at the time meant the Portuguese ship; by the eighteenth century shogunal officials themselves understood it as foreign or barbarian ships in general, and came to think the prohibition of their arrival was the ancestral law.

So: a set of measures taken in the 1630s against a specific enemy for a specific reason; misunderstood by the government's own officials a century later into a general principle; furnished with a name and an identity in 1801 by a private scholar translating a foreigner's essay; and thereafter invoked as immemorial. This is what the seam looks like when it operates on the rulers rather than the ruled — an order whose picture of its own founding policy had been drawn by a document nobody in the government had written.

Four gateways, not a wall

What existed instead of a closed country was a set of licensed apertures, each held by a different party. Kondō Jūzō's draft memorial of 1797 — advising the shogunate on how to deal with Russia — states that the places of intercourse with foreign countries in our realm are limited to four, Nagasaki, Satsuma, Tsushima and Matsumae, and this appears to be the earliest clear statement of the arrangement; the phrase "the four gateways" is itself modern, having come into use around 1980 with the historian Arano Yasunori.

That is a valve system with named keyholders, not a barrier. Nagasaki carried the Dutch and Chinese trade under direct shogunal administration; Tsushima carried relations with Korea through the Sō house; Satsuma carried the Ryūkyū connection through the Shimazu; Matsumae carried the northern trade. Each keyholder held a monopoly, each monopoly was a grant from the shogunate, and each therefore had a permanent interest in the arrangement continuing. The country was not sealed. Its foreign information and foreign goods were funnelled through four points that the centre could watch and, if necessary, close.

The inflow valve, and the bureau that worked it

What came through Nagasaki was inspected, and the inspection had an apparatus and a method.

The restriction is routinely misdescribed. The prohibition was on Chinese-translated Western books touching Christianity, and was not — as is often misunderstood — a prohibition of works in horizontal script, that is of Dutch books. Following Tsuji Tatsuya, thirty-two Chinese-translated Western works by Christian missionaries were prohibited from import in 1630, and in 1685 it was laid down that any book containing even a single phrase concerning Christianity should be burned, or blacked out and sent back, and that in some cases the trade of the importing vessel should be forbidden.

Book-appraisers were stationed at the Nagasaki trade office and book-inspectors at the Nagasaki Confucian temple to censor the volumes carried in from China. The censorship was severe: prohibited or suspect books were, according to the degree of harm, burned or sent back with the cargo, and where a book contained so much as a word or half a phrase about Christianity, that part was blacked out with ink, or the whole leaf was torn from the book.

Then the decisive act, and it was the government's own. Because the prohibited list included technical and scientific works with no connection to Christianity — Euclid's Elements among them — the eighth shogun relaxed the prohibition in 1720 and permitted the import of such scientific and technical books. He did it for use: he was pursuing domestic production and import substitution, imported Western horses and engaged a German riding master, and from around 1740 set Aoki Konyō and Noro Genjō to learn Dutch. He was also pursuing a calendar reform and wanted Western astronomy for it.

The consequence is the most important single fact in this module. **The channel through which Western learning entered Japan was not forced open from outside. It was opened deliberately, from within, by a reforming government that wanted better astronomy and better horses.** Everything that followed — the medical translations, the private academies, the men who by the 1830s knew more about the world than the councillors who governed them — came through a door the shogunate had unbolted itself for entirely practical reasons.

The classified newsletter

Alongside the books ran a second and narrower channel. The head of the Dutch factory was required to submit, in writing, an account of events in the world, delivered through the Nagasaki magistrate and passed upward. It arrived annually. It was not published.

For roughly two centuries, therefore, the best-informed party in Japan about the state of the world was the shogunal council, and the information on which it based its foreign policy was a state secret held by a handful of men. That is the trusted-information position in its purest and most concentrated form: one channel, one source, one recipient, no check.

It also contains, visibly, the failure mode that would eventually matter. When the single classified source is wrong, nobody in the government can discover it from another; and the only people in the country positioned to notice are private scholars reading the same foreign books the government let in — men with no standing, no office, and no protection.

The domestic seam, sold to a guild

The internal information order was organised on an entirely different principle, and the principle was commercial.

A set of five articles was issued as a town proclamation in Edo in the eleventh month of 1722, in Kyoto in the second month of 1723 and in Osaka in the third, and remained the standard governing commercial publishing until the end of the shogunate. The fifth article forbade anything concerning the Tokugawa house, in print or in manuscript alike, unless the magistrate's direction was obtained for unavoidable cause. Erotic works were banned, new writing on current affairs was banned, and the authorship and publisher of every work had to be stated.

The fourth article was of a different kind. It gave the booksellers' guilds of the three cities exactly what they had wanted — clarification of publishing rights and regulation of unauthorised reprinting and imitation — while the remaining four articles were all content intervention by the authorities. And the guild received something more valuable still: the booksellers' guild was officially recognised by the shogunate in Edo in 1722 and in Osaka the following year; a bookseller who did not belong to it could not sell books at all; the guilds were repeatedly instructed to prevent pirated editions and offences against public decency; and inspection of the books, prints and theatre pictures to be published was made the duty of rotating officers of the guild itself.

State that plainly, because it is the module's second major finding. **The shogunate bought its censorship with a cartel.** It gave the book trade a compulsory guild, an enforceable copyright and protection from piracy, and in exchange the trade censored itself — thoroughly, at its own expense, and with far better knowledge of what was being published than any magistrate could have had. The interpreter class holding the domestic chokepoint in Tokugawa Japan was not a priesthood or an academy. It was a licensed commercial association whose monopoly was worth more to it than any single book.

And the result was not a silence. It was a very large, competitive and inventive print culture. By the Tenpō era there were more than fifty book and popular-print wholesalers in Edo alone, in Nihonbashi, Kanda, Bakurochō, Asakusa, Fukagawa, Shitaya, Ryōgoku and Shiba; Edo, Osaka and Kyoto were the three great distribution routes, and provincial towns had their own booksellers and their own local editions. When the guilds were dissolved in 1841 and reconstituted in 1851, new entry brought the Edo booksellers' guild to a hundred and twenty-five houses.

The episodes, and what they were actually about

The enforcement was episodic and it clustered around moments of reform.

Erotic publishing had been forbidden by the proclamation of 1722. In the fifth and ninth months of 1790 the prohibition was reaffirmed, and in the tenth month the popular-print wholesalers were instructed that the rotating officers of their guild must inspect the content of illustrated books and similar works before publication. Despite this the publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō commissioned three works from Santō Kyōden, apparently reasoning that because they were set in the past and did not openly depict present manners they would be safe; and Kyōden dressed all three as admonitions against dissipation. Both were punished, the author bodily and the publisher in his property. In the same reform the coastal-defence treatise of Hayashi Shihei was suppressed and its author confined.

None of that touched the structure of the order. The Kansei prosecutions were about decency, about the depiction of the licensed quarters, and about a reformer's programme of moral tightening. The book trade adapted, and continued.

The episode that matters is different in kind, and it comes in 1839.

In 1837 the American merchant ship Morrison arrived carrying Japanese castaways it had rescued, seeking to return them and to open trade; mistaken for a British warship, it was fired on at Uraga and again at Yamagawa, under the standing order to drive off approaching foreign vessels without inquiry. The following year the Dutch ship at Nagasaki submitted to the shogunate a report of the incident which — for some reason describing the American merchantman as a British vessel — stated that a British ship would be coming directly on the pretext of escorting castaways, threatening the country's policy. After debate the shogunate resolved on expulsion, and the matter became a subject of public discussion; among Dutch-studies scholars and others informed about foreign affairs, voices of alarm were raised. Watanabe Kazan attempted to set out his view in a treatise but never completed it, and it was Takano Chōei's Tale of a Dream that became widely known.

The circulating manuscript reached the senior councillor Mizuno Tadakuni by the spring of 1839, and Mizuno ordered the inspector Torii Yōzō to search out this "Morrison" and the author of the work. On the nineteenth day of the fourth month Torii directed his subordinates, under cover of hunting the author, to conduct a covert investigation into Watanabe Kazan's associations; he had already been investigating Kazan since the previous year, and appears to have been looking for an opportunity to arrest a man reputed to be both a Dutch-studies scholar and a great patron. On the denunciation of Torii, Kazan, Takano Chōei, Koseki San'ei and other Dutch-studies

scholars were suppressed; Kazan was confined to his home domain and Chōei imprisoned for life — a life that thereafter consisted of prison, escape, and suicide.

Set the elements side by side. The government fired on an unarmed merchant ship returning its own castaways, without establishing what it was. Its single classified source of foreign intelligence then told it, incorrectly, what the ship had been. Its own most competent students of the outside world attempted to correct the record and to argue that the policy was dangerous. And a factional official, who wanted one of those men destroyed for reasons of his own, used the correction as the instrument.

An order that punishes its critics is doing something ordinary and survivable. An order that punishes its *experts*, for correcting a factual error the order made about a ship, at the instigation of a rival faction, has broken the only mechanism it had for finding out that it was wrong. Fourteen years later the ships came back, and the men who had understood what was coming were dead, imprisoned, or discredited.

What was never suppressed

One large omission belongs here, and it is offered as this study's own argument rather than as a reported finding.

Across the same two centuries a school of native learning grew up which held, in print, that the imperial line was the true and original sovereignty of Japan, that Chinese learning was a foreign accretion, and that the country's authentic order was the one that had preceded the warrior governments. It was published, taught in private academies, and read widely. The shogunate neither sponsored it nor banned it.

The reason it could not ban it is structural, and it is the bill for a decision made in 1603. The shogunate's own warrant ran through the emperor. Its title was an imperial appointment, renewed by imperial investiture at every succession; its founder's deification had been conferred by imperial decree; it had married its daughters into the imperial house and legislated the emperor's daily curriculum. A government holding office by imperial commission cannot treat an argument for imperial primacy as sedition without impeaching the source of its own authority. So the doctrine that would eventually supply the vocabulary of the shogunate's overthrow developed, unmolested, inside the one gap the order's legitimacy could not be made to cover — and the men who suppressed a treatise on coastal defence and imprisoned a physician for a pamphlet about a ship left it entirely alone.

Reading the seam against the framework

Four returns.

First, a seam can be crowded at home and captured abroad at the same time, and the captured half is the one that destroys the ruler. The collection's working distinction is between a crowded seam — many competing hands that check one another, which is the whole of the available liberty — and a captured one, held by a single hand, which is foreclosure. Tokugawa Japan ran both at once, on different subject matter. Domestic interpretation was crowded to a degree unusual anywhere in the world at the time: hundreds of publishers, lending libraries, rival schools of Confucianism, native learning, Dutch learning, popular moral teaching, and a censorship that principally policed decency and the ruling house's dignity. Foreign information was captured absolutely: one channel, one annual report, one recipient. **The framework should note that the two conditions can coexist, that the variable is subject matter rather than the order as a whole, and that a captured channel is more dangerous to the ruler than to the ruled** — because the ruled can live without foreign news, while the ruler who has monopolised it has also monopolised the error, and has left himself nobody positioned to correct him.

Second, a state can privatise its censorship by selling a monopoly, and this is cheaper and more effective than any bureau. The proclamation of 1722 contained four articles of content control and one commercial privilege; the guild took the privilege, and thereafter policed its own members through rotating inspecting officers, because membership was compulsory for anyone who wished to sell a book and the licence was worth more than any manuscript. **Where a study finds a vigorous commercial print culture coexisting with light direct censorship machinery, it should look for the trade organisation and ask what it was given** — and should expect to find that the state's censorship costs have been converted into the trade's monopoly rents.

Third, an order can be captured by a description of itself manufactured outside it. The measures of the 1630s were specific, occasioned, and directed at a named enemy. A hundred and fifty years later they had become, in the mouths of the shogunate's own officials, a general and immemorial ancestral law forbidding foreign intercourse; and the name and identity of that law came from a private translation of a German physician's essay, made in 1801, which the government neither commissioned nor published. **Where a study finds an order invoking ancestral law, it should date the ancestor** — and should be alert to the possibility that the doctrine binding a government's hands was assembled retrospectively by people outside it, from materials the government did not control, and then adopted by officials who had no idea they were quoting a foreigner.

Fourth, and the diagnostic this module most wants carried forward: the suppression that ends an order is the one aimed at its own experts. Censoring critics is routine, cheap and compatible with very long survival; this order did it for two centuries without harm. What it could not survive was the moment when factional advantage at the apex made it profitable to destroy the small number of men who held an accurate picture of the outside world — men the government itself had created, by opening the book trade in 1720 for practical reasons, and then never seated anywhere. **An order's information system does not fail when it silences dissent. It fails when the people who are right have no position from which to be right, so that correcting the government becomes an act of opposition rather than a service to it.** That is what happened in 1839, and it is why the men best equipped to advise the shogunate in 1853 were unavailable to it.

A note on sources. This module rests on Japanese reference scholarship, paraphrased, with technical terms given in the original. The account of the coinage of *sakoku* — Shizuki Tadao's translation around 1800 of the final appendix chapter of the Dutch second edition (1733) of Kaempfer's *History of Japan*, the length of the original title and his selection of a word from his own translation, the fact that the work was never printed and circulated only in manuscript, the fact that the term did not then spread, and the statement that "sakoku edict" is a term invented by post-Meiji scholars for a prohibition that never bore that name — is from the Japanese Wikipedia article on *sakoku* and the Yamakawa reference entry on Shizuki's text. The observations that Kaempfer's chapter approved of the policy, that the Dutch title posed the question, that Shizuki wrote in a critical spirit against a shogunate invoking ancestral law while refusing Laxman, and that the *galeota* of the original prohibition meant the Portuguese ship and was later misunderstood by shogunal officials as foreign ships in general, are from the *Kokushi daijiten / Sekai daihyakka jiten* entry reproduced by JapanKnowledge. Kondō Jūzō's memorial draft of 1797 and the modern origin of the phrase "four gateways" with Arano Yasunori around 1980 are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on that term; Arano's own restatement of his position is available in a *nippon.com* interview consulted here for orientation only.

On the import censorship: the correction that the 1630 prohibition covered thirty-two Chinese-translated Western works by missionaries and was not a ban on Dutch-language books, and the 1685 rule on burning, ink-blacking and return with occasional forfeiture of the vessel's trade, follow the Japanese Wikipedia article on Dutch studies citing Tsuji Tatsuya. The censorship apparatus — book-appraisers at the Nagasaki trade office and book-inspectors at the Nagasaki Confucian temple — and the method of burning, returning, blacking out or tearing out the whole leaf are from the *Nihon*

daihyakka zensho entry on prohibited books, which also supplies the point that the banned list included works such as Euclid's *Elements* and that this motivated the relaxation of 1720. Yoshimune's practical motives, the import of Western horses and the German riding master, and the instruction to Aoki Konyō and Noro Genjō, are from the National Diet Library's exhibition on Japanese–Dutch exchange; the calendar-reform motive is from a Kobe University library exhibition. Sources differ trivially on whether the relaxation is dated to Kyōhō 3 or Kyōhō 5; the standard date is 1720.

On domestic publishing: the five articles of the eleventh month of 1722, their extension to Kyoto and Osaka in 1723, their standing as the governing norm to the end of the period, the prohibition on writing about the Tokugawa house in print or manuscript, and the analysis that four articles were content intervention while the fourth answered the guilds' own wish for clarified publishing rights, are from a National Institute of Japanese Literature lecture text summarising the scholarship of Yamamoto and Nakano Mitsutoshi. The official recognition of the booksellers' guild in 1722, the impossibility of selling books outside it, the repeated instructions to police piracy and decency, the inspection duty laid on rotating guild officers, the numbers of Edo wholesalers, and the dissolution of 1841 and reconstitution of 1851 with a hundred and twenty-five houses, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on Edo-period publishing. The Kansei sequence — the standing ban of 1722, its reaffirmation in the fifth and ninth months of 1790, the inspection order of the tenth month, Tsutaya's commissioning of three works from Kyōden and the reasoning attributed to both men — is from an art-press article drawing on the specialist literature; the specific penalties imposed on Kyōden and Tsutaya are widely reported in the popular literature but have not been verified here and are therefore given without figures.

On the Morrison affair and the persecution of 1839: the ship's character and errand, the firing at Uraga and Yamagawa under the expulsion order, the Dutch report's misidentification of it as a British vessel and its warning, the shogunate's confirmation of expulsion, the alarm among Dutch-studies scholars, Watanabe Kazan's unfinished treatise and Takano Chōei's circulating manuscript, Mizuno Tadakuni's order to Torii Yōzō, the covert investigation of the nineteenth day of the fourth month, Torii's prior surveillance and apparent motive, and the sentences of domiciliary confinement and life imprisonment, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the affair and from the city of Ōshū's public history of Takano Chōei. The characterisation of Torii's motive as factional follows the Japanese Wikipedia article's own assessment.

The account of native learning and of why the shogunate could not proscribe it is this study's own argument, constructed from the legitimacy structure established

earlier in this study rather than from a source making the same point, and should be read as an argument offered for testing. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

The Man Who Moved to a Poorer Province

Module 8 · Elite Coordination and the Default — an order that paid capability in office and loyalty in land and took great care never to pay one man in both; the audit of the chain link by link; and the discovery that the device designed to keep the outer lords weak was what eventually forced two of them to build the only competent governments in Japan

The proposition this module tests is not about loyalty and not about ideology. It is an observation about which hierarchies lasted, and it is this: the durable ones were arranged so that each man in them, simply by looking after his own position, was thereby defending the whole arrangement — not because he had been persuaded of anything, not because he liked the men above or beside him, but because the arrangement was where his own standing came from. Where that holds, an order reproduces itself by default; no cabal is needed and no coordination is required, and men who despise each other will still keep the thing running. Where it stops holding for a group that has standing and means, that is where the fracture will come from.

So the question is put to the hierarchy, not to the population below it, which was priced separately. Two hundred-odd daimyō houses, the shogunate's own bureaucracy, the retainer bands inside every domain, and the men who financed all of them. For each: if this arrangement collapsed tomorrow, is he better or worse off?

And the answer, for two hundred years, was that almost every one of them was worse off — which is why nothing happened. The interest of this case lies in exactly where the sum eventually changed sign, and in the fact that it changed sign because of a device the order had installed to prevent precisely that.

The problem, and the answer that was built for it

Ieyasu's problem after 1615 has already been stated: he was the largest of two hundred like things, in a country that had spent a century recalculating which of them was largest. The specific danger was not that a lord would rebel. It was that a lord would accumulate — land, revenue, retainers, allies, information, and a position in the government — until rebellion became a rational calculation for him.

The answer the Tokugawa built, over the first three reigns, was not to prevent accumulation. It was to make accumulation impossible in more than one currency at a time.

The distribution of land was settled at Sekigahara and afterward, and it gave the largest holdings to the houses that had been enemies or late friends, placed far from the capital. The distribution of *office* was then arranged to be almost exactly its inverse. The council of elders, the shogunate's standing highest office, was filled from hereditary Tokugawa vassals of twenty-five thousand koku and upward, several serving at once on monthly rotation. In practice the men appointed were most often in the fifty to a hundred and fifty thousand koku class — middling among the daimyō, or the lower half of middling. Being a hereditary vassal was an absolute condition; men of the Tokugawa collateral and branch houses were not selected, and even among the hereditary vassals the very greatest houses were almost never appointed; a domain in Kyūshū disqualified its holder however large it was, because the defence of Nagasaki meant its lord could not be sitting in Edo Castle.

So: the great outside lords were rich and excluded. The Tokugawa kin were exalted and excluded. The greatest of the loyal houses were powerful and excluded. Government was placed in the hands of middling men whose houses were too small to matter militarily and whose entire standing came from holding the post.

Nor were those men left with much individual discretion. In the 1630s the third shogun forced collegiality and monthly rotation on them and progressively wrote down and narrowed their competences, so that the office was institutionally settled by 1638 — and in the eleventh month of that same year he removed Doi Toshikatsu and Sakai Tadakatsu from the council altogether and directed them to attend only on days when great matters were discussed, which is the origin of the senior-councillor office above it. The two most powerful administrators in Japan were promoted out of the machinery.

The strongest single piece of evidence that the arrangement worked is a man's career decision. Lords whose domains lay far from Edo found advancement in the shogunal government difficult; Mizuno Tadakuni, lord of Karatsu in Hizen, strongly desired to rise in the government, and for that reason contrived and obtained a transfer from Karatsu — where his real income was high — to Hamamatsu in Tōtōmi, where his real income fell sharply but which lay much nearer Edo, and thereafter rose to the council of elders.

A man gave up money for office, deliberately, at a calculated loss. That is what a working default looks like from inside. The arrangement had made position more

valuable than revenue to the class that ran it, which meant the class that ran it could not conceivably want the arrangement to end.

Two devices that extend the same principle

The supplement that expires. The most elegant expression of the whole design came in 1723. Each office in the shogunate was assigned a standard income; where a man appointed to it held a hereditary income below that standard, the shortfall was paid to him for the duration of his tenure only. A bannerman of eight hundred koku appointed to the town magistracy, whose standard was three thousand, received two thousand two hundred koku as supplement while he served. Because the increase was not inherited, able men of small income could be placed in high office readily, and the expansion of the shogunate's own expenditure was prevented.

Read that as a solution to the open problem and it is remarkable. The centre needs capable men; capable men must be paid enough to do the job; but paying them permanently enlarges their houses and manufactures, over generations, exactly the powerful lineages the order exists to prevent. The device separates the two. The money attaches to the chair, not to the man, and goes back in the drawer when he stands up. Capability could be bought without being capitalised.

Spare heirs, kept in reserve. The failure that destroyed the Toyotomi was a succession, and the Tokugawa built against it structurally by creating collateral houses whose function was to supply a shogun if the main line failed. It did fail. With the death of the seventh shogun the direct Tokugawa line was entirely extinguished; the three houses contended for the succession and Yoshimune of Kii prevailed — and the order did not so much as tremble. A hereditary system with no reserve is a lottery on one man's fertility; this one had been provided with spares, and when the ticket came up blank the machinery produced the eighth shogun without a battle.

Alternate attendance, and a correction

The device everybody names first is alternate residence, and it deserves testing rather than assuming, because the standard account of it is not quite right.

The system was written into law in the revision of the laws for the military houses in 1635, whose second article laid down that the residence of the greater and lesser lords in Edo was to be by alternation, with attendance during the fourth month each year. A year in Edo and a year in the domain was the rule, half-yearly for the hereditary vassals of the Kantō, and the lord's wife and heir resided permanently in Edo as hostages. The

cost was crushing — the journeys, the retinues, the maintenance of two establishments — and the standard account says the burden was the point.

Two facts complicate that. The first is that the shogunate tried to reduce the expenditure. The compiled proclamations record that the numbers in the processions had lately become very large, a cost to the provinces and a labour on the people, and that they should hereafter be reduced to what was appropriate. Lords were competing with one another in the size and splendour of their processions, because the road was where relative standing was displayed, and the government was trying to stop them.

The second is decisive. Between 1722 and 1730 the shogunate levied a rice contribution of a hundred koku for every ten thousand of assessment on the daimyō, and in exchange reduced their required period of residence in Edo by half. The shogunate's own men regarded the levy as a humiliation.

The government sold back half of the hostage system for rice, and did it for eight years, because it needed money more. Whatever alternate attendance was, it was not the load-bearing beam of the Tokugawa settlement; a load-bearing beam is not traded for grain. What it actually did — and this matters for the fracture — was to impose on every lord in Japan a permanent, competitive, unavoidable expenditure denominated in money, in a capital city, on a scale set by his rivals rather than by his revenue.

The audit, link by link

The shogun and the main Tokugawa house. Better off by the arrangement to a degree that requires no argument.

The collateral houses. Exalted, wealthy, barred from office, and holders of a contingent claim on the succession itself. Their interest in the arrangement's continuation was total, and one of them collected on it in 1716.

The hereditary vassals. The clearest case in the chain. Their domains were small, their offices were everything, and their offices existed only because the shogunate did. A man in this class defending his own position was defending the shogunate in the most literal sense available, because his position *was* the shogunate. Mizuno Tadakuni paying for advancement with a poorer province is the proof.

The outside lords. The interesting link, and the one the seed for this study expected to break first. They were rich, they had been enemies at the founding, they were excluded from government, and they held large and coherent territories far from Edo. On the face of it, disaffection.

But run the ledger honestly and it comes out the other way for two centuries. They kept their domains, their retainers, their castle towns and their internal autonomy; the shogunate did not tax them and interfered in their government hardly at all; their

assessed revenue was theirs. Exclusion from the council cost them very little, because the council administered the Tokugawa house's affairs and the shogunal lands, not theirs. And the alternative to the arrangement was not independence — it was the century their great-grandfathers had lived through, in which houses of their size were destroyed routinely. A great outside lord in 1750 was a rich, secure, autonomous prince whose only serious grievance was a matter of precedence. That is not a man who wants a war.

The shogunate's own retainers. Bannermen and housemen, twenty-two thousand direct vassals holding the shogunal lands and staffing the administration. Their positions were entirely creatures of the arrangement — and, as established earlier in this study, their stipends were fixed in rice while prices moved, so that their real position declined steadily for two centuries. They were the first group in the chain whose interest and whose experience began to diverge. But their remedy was always to petition the government for relief, which the government repeatedly granted at the merchants' expense, and a man petitioning for relief is not a man attacking the source of the relief.

The domain chief retainers and upper samurai. Miniature of the hereditary vassals, one level down: hereditary office in a domain government, standing derived entirely from the domain, and the domain's standing derived from the shogunate. Better off.

The lower samurai. Here the chain thins. Small hereditary stipends, no realistic prospect of office because office was hereditary in the upper houses, formation as warriors, a legal prohibition on any other occupation, and an income eroding every decade. They were not oppressed in the way the outcaste categories were oppressed; they were something more dangerous to an order — a formed, literate, armed class of men whose position gave them dignity and denied them prospects, and whose numbers grew with every generation.

The village headmen. Registered, literate, holding office in the local administration, allocating the tax, and standing at the exact point where the settlement touched the ground. Better off, and among the arrangement's most reliable defenders.

The merchant houses. Outside the settlement, holding its money, periodically expropriated, and — the crucial point — never once, in two hundred years, in a position to do anything about it. A creditor with no standing, no arms and no office is not a claimant. He is an asset.

Read the chain as a whole and it is an extraordinarily well-made thing. The one link where the answer to the diagnostic question was clearly *no* in the early period — the masterless warriors — had been substantially closed off by 1651, when the shogunate

blunted its own best instrument of daimyō control to stop manufacturing them. After that the chain holds everywhere except at the lower samurai, and the lower samurai had no institutional route to anything.

Where it broke, and why the order's own device did it

The fracture, when it came, did not come from a link deciding it was better off without the arrangement. It came from somewhere the audit above cannot see, and the mechanism is worth setting out carefully because it is the module's finding.

Take Satsuma, the second-largest domain in Japan, held by a house that had fought against Ieyasu. By the 1820s its income was about a hundred and thirty thousand ryō against expenditure of about two hundred thousand — of which roughly half, a hundred thousand ryō, went on maintaining the Edo establishment and the alternate attendance, and roughly forty per cent, eighty thousand, on interest. Satsuma's productive capacity was low, and the costs of the shogunate's assigned river works and of its own lord's programmes had brought the domain's debt to five million ryō by the early nineteenth century. The annual interest alone exceeded eighty thousand ryō, more than the domain's entire revenue: it was bankrupt.

Look at where the money was going. Half of it to a residence requirement imposed by the shogunate, and most of the rest to service debt incurred largely in meeting that requirement and the construction levies. The instrument designed to ensure the outer lords never accumulated the means to threaten the centre had done its work perfectly and had thereby created, in the largest of them, a fiscal emergency that no ordinary administration could solve.

What Satsuma did about it is the point. In 1828 the retired and the reigning lord commissioned Zushō Hirosato to rebuild the finances. Zushō was the second son of a lower-ranking samurai of the castle town, adopted at twelve, taken into service at fifteen as a tea attendant, and raised through the town magistracy to become chief retainer in 1832. From 1836 the domain's five million ryō of debt at Kyoto, Osaka and then Edo was converted, by force, into interest-free repayment over two hundred and fifty years; the sugar of the southern islands was made the axis of revenue under a strengthened monopoly; other domain products were improved and monopolised; the trade through Ryūkyū was expanded; men were promoted and expenditure cut; and within little more than a decade the domain treasury held five hundred thousand ryō. Merchants were ruined by the enforced rescheduling and the shogunate ignored it. The proceeds bought firearms in quantity, industrial works, and a steam vessel — and the prefecture's own official history states the conclusion without embarrassment: the success of that financial reform became the basis for driving the Meiji Restoration.

Now assemble the mechanism, because every element of it was installed by the order itself.

The shogunate imposed a ruinous, competitive, money-denominated expenditure on the outer lords in order to keep them weak. The expenditure worked: it drove the largest of them to the edge of default. Default could not be met by ordinary means, so the domain was compelled to promote a man from the lower warrior stratum — the one link in the chain with capability and no prospects — and to give him powers no hereditary chief retainer would have been allowed. He solved it by expropriating merchants, running monopolies over a subject population, and trading illegally through a gateway the shogunate had licensed to his own house. The shogunate, which had by then expropriated its own creditors three times, was in no position to object and did not.

The result was that by the 1840s the two or three domains that had been squeezed hardest had the only governments in Japan with money, modern armaments, promotion by ability, and a cadre of competent men from the lower samurai — and the shogunate, which had never been squeezed hard enough to need any of that, had none of it.

The pressure that was meant to prevent the outer lords from accumulating means instead compelled them to modernise, and left the centre alone with its inherited machinery. The default did not fail because a link stopped benefiting. It failed because the order's own disciplinary instrument functioned as a selection pressure, and selected for administrative capability in exactly the houses the order most wanted incapable.

Classification against the Menu

The corpus's short list of answers to the open problem — export the surplus, prevent it forming by recruiting outsiders, rotate the successful before they entrench, divide power among rivals, co-opt by kinship or faith, or simply occupy the seat the previous order was already using — does not contain this case cleanly, and the residue is worth naming.

Export is unavailable and was deliberately foreclosed. Prevention by outsider recruitment is absent: the entire apparatus was hereditary, drawn from a closed body of Tokugawa vassals. Rotation by merit is absent: there was no examination, no law of avoidance, no career open to talent; the offices were held by the same houses for two centuries. Assuming the chair does not apply, this being a consolidation rather than a conquest of a foreign order. Co-optation is present and substantial — an elite bought with land, holding armed retinues, on the classic medieval terms — and was made safe,

as established earlier in this study, by removing the ability of retinues to be combined rather than the retinues themselves.

What is left over is the distinctive mechanism, and it is not quite divide-and-balance. Dividing and balancing fragments *power* among rivals so that no one of them can consolidate. This order did something logically prior: it fragmented *the rewards*, so that the rivals could not form. Land went to the men who were kept out of government. Office went to men whose land was too small to matter. The greatest of the loyal houses got neither government nor promotion. And within the shogunal service, income attached to the chair and reverted when the man left it.

Call the family **divide the payoff**: pay capability in office without estate, pay loyalty in estate without office, and take care that no man is ever paid in both. Its precondition is that the two currencies be genuinely separable and separately desirable — which requires, as it did here, a status system that makes office honourable in itself. Its advantage over the other families is that it needs no outsiders, no examinations, no rotation, and no continuing violence; it is self-executing, and it ran for two and a half centuries with two rebellions, both in the first fifty years. Its characteristic liability is the one this case demonstrates: **an order that separates capability from wealth has no mechanism for noticing that the wealth has gone somewhere else**, because the men who would notice hold no property and the men who hold property hold no office.

Exposure to the cracks

Fracture at the apex: low, and it stayed low. Collegial councils, monthly rotation, an inspectorate, and a succession reservoir that worked when tested in 1716.

Exhaustion in great-power war: not applicable for two centuries, and this is the case's most distinctive feature. The order never fought anybody. It therefore never discovered what its military establishment had become, which is a form of exposure rather than an absence of one.

Conquest by a rival elite: the actual outcome, and it came from inside — from domains within the settlement that had built better governments than the centre.

Overproduction of claimants: high, chronic, and unrelieved. A hereditary warrior class of perhaps a million and a half people, forbidden by law to take up any other occupation, forbidden to leave the country, producing more sons than there were stipends, in an order with no frontier and no examination ladder. The pressure had exactly two outlets across the period: the cities, where a younger son could quietly become something else and often did; and, at the very end, the reforming domain

governments, which needed capable men and could not afford to ask about their birth. The first outlet defused the pressure for two centuries. The second armed it.

Reading the default against the framework

Four returns.

First, a seventh Menu family, offered for the list. Divide the payoff — office without estate to the capable, estate without office to the loyal, and never both to one man — with the shogunal supplement of 1723, expiring on departure from the post, as its purest instrument. It is distinct from divide-and-balance, which fragments power among rivals who already exist; this prevents the rivals existing. It is cheap, self-executing, and requires no violence, no outsiders and no rotation. It needs a status order in which office is honourable independently of income, and it produces one diagnostic tell that a study can look for: **men accepting a loss of revenue in order to become eligible for office.** Where that behaviour appears in the record, the payoff has been successfully split, and the class doing it will not defect.

Second, and the finding this case exists to contribute: a disciplinary instrument aimed at an elite can act as a selection pressure on it, and select for the very capability the instrument was meant to deny. The corpus reads devices like alternate attendance as straightforwardly weakening — an expense imposed to prevent accumulation. Japan shows the second-order effect over a long enough run. The expense was real and it worked; it drove the largest outer domains toward insolvency; insolvency could not be met by hereditary administration; and the domains were therefore forced to promote from below, break their creditors, build monopolies, and run their finances as a professional problem. The shogunate, exposed to no comparable pressure, did none of these things. After two centuries the disciplined were competent and the disciplinarian was not. **Where a study finds an apex imposing a chronic, survivable burden on a subordinate elite, it should ask what that elite had to become in order to bear it** — and should expect the answer, over a long enough period, to be *better organised than the apex*.

Third, the weakest link was not the richest excluded party but the poorest included one. The audit's obvious candidate for disaffection was the great outside lord: rich, historically hostile, barred from government. He was not the fault line, and for two centuries he had no reason to be, because the arrangement gave him almost everything he wanted and the alternative was a war his ancestors had lost. The fault line was the lower samurai — formed to a status that promised significance, legally barred from any other occupation, holding a stipend that shrank by arithmetic every decade, and structurally unpromotable in the shogunate's own hereditary service. **A group**

with standing but no prospects is more dangerous to an order than a group with means but no grievance, and the audit should be run for prospects as carefully as for property.

Fourth, the two halves joined: the fracture required both, and neither alone would have done it. The lower samurai were disaffected for a century and did nothing, because they had no institution. The outer domains had means for two centuries and did nothing, because they had no grievance and no capacity. What produced 1868 was the moment the fiscal crisis in the outer domains created an institutional demand for exactly the men the shogunate's own hereditary service had no use for. The grievance found an employer. **A study looking for the crack should not look for a discontented class or for a capable institution but for the point at which a discontented class becomes useful to an institution with standing** — because that is where the two halves of a fracture are welded, and until they are welded there is no fracture at all, only complaint on one side and money on the other.

A note on sources. This module rests on Japanese reference scholarship and institutional histories, paraphrased, with technical terms given in the original. The composition and working of the council of elders — the qualification of hereditary vassal status at twenty-five thousand *koku* and upward, the typical range of fifty to a hundred and fifty thousand, the exclusion of the Tokugawa collateral houses and of the greatest hereditary houses, the disqualification of Kyūshū lords on account of Nagasaki, the fixed complement of four or five, the monthly rotation, the imposition of collegiality and the narrowing of competences under the third shogun with institutional settlement in 1638, and the origin of the senior-councillor office in the removal of Doi Toshikatsu and Sakai Tadakatsu in the eleventh month of that year — are drawn from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the office, the Yamakawa and Shōgakukan reference entries, a *JBpress* essay by a historian of the period, and a castle-history blog summarising the appointment criteria. The last of these gives the range as thirty thousand to a hundred and twenty thousand *koku* with a castle-holding requirement, which does not agree exactly with the reference entries; the discrepancy concerns the conventions of appointment rather than the structure, and both are reported.

Mizuno Tadakuni's transfer from Karatsu to Hamamatsu in order to become eligible for advancement is from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the council of elders, which gives it as an illustration of the general rule that distant domains impeded promotion. The *tashidaka* system of 1723 — the assignment of a standard income to each office, the payment of the shortfall for the duration of tenure only, the worked example of an eight-hundred-*koku* bannerman appointed to a three-thousand-*koku*

magistracy, and the twin purposes of enabling appointment by ability and restraining permanent expenditure — is from the Yamakawa and Ōbunsha reference entries and the Japanese Wikipedia article, which agree closely. The extinction of the direct line with the seventh shogun and the accession of Yoshimune from the Kii house are standard.

On alternate residence: the codification in the second article of the 1635 revision of the laws for the military houses, the annual attendance in the fourth month, the yearly alternation with half-yearly terms for the Kantō hereditary vassals, and the permanent Edo residence of the principal wife and heir, are from the Japanese Wikipedia article and the Ōbunsha entry. The shogunate's own instruction that procession numbers had become excessive and should be reduced, quoted from the compiled proclamations, is reported in the same Wikipedia article. The rice levy of 1722–30 at a hundred *koku* per ten thousand of assessment in exchange for halving the Edo residence period is from a Japanese educational reference, and the characterisation of the levy as a humiliation is from another; both are secondary and the arrangement itself is not in dispute.

On Satsuma: the income and expenditure figures, the allocation of about half to the Edo establishment and about forty per cent to interest, and the five-million-*ryō* debt with annual interest exceeding revenue, are from a Kagoshima local-history site and a corporate local-history page, and should be treated as the widely repeated regional account rather than as archivally verified figures. The commission of Zushō Hirosato in 1828, his origins as the second son of a lower samurai and his entry into service as a tea attendant, his rise to chief retainer, the enforced conversion of the debt to interest-free repayment over two hundred and fifty years from 1836, the strengthening of the Amami sugar monopoly, the expansion of trade through Ryūkyū, the promotion of men and reduction of expenditure, and the accumulation of a domain reserve, are from the Shōko Shūseikan museum's chronology, the Kagoshima prefectural government's own historical page, the city of Kagoshima's monument notice, and the Japanese Wikipedia article. The figure for the reserve differs across these — five hundred thousand *ryō* in the museum and prefectural accounts, two million in the Wikipedia article — and both are given rather than reconciled. The statement that the reform's success became the basis for driving the Meiji Restoration is the Kagoshima prefectural government's own formulation.

The parallel reform in Chōshū under Murata Seifū, which this module names as part of the same pattern, has not been researched for this module and is deliberately not described; it belongs to the module on change and collapse and should be verified there before any weight is put on it. The estimate of the warrior population is as given in the general literature and is not verified here. The characterisation of the lower samurai's

position — hereditary small stipends, effective exclusion from office, legal prohibition on other occupations, and declining real income — follows from material established earlier in this study rather than from a source making the argument in these terms, and the conclusion this module draws from it is offered as an argument to be tested. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

One Thousand and Seven Villages

Module 9 · Plurality or Foreclosure — an order with no assembly, no charter, no free press and a penal code its subjects were forbidden to read, in which a thousand villages nevertheless combined and destroyed a monopoly the shogunate itself had chartered; where that lever came from, what made it work, and why the only route into the ruling class had a published price

Not: was there freedom. That question invites an answer about rhetoric, and rhetoric is cheap in every order ever built. The useful question is narrower and answerable from records: **was there anything a person could do, against the state or against someone with power over him, that had to be answered?** And if there was, where did it come from — because the people at the bottom did not write it, and somebody's interest put it there.

The corpus's working answer is that liberties are residue. Factions inside a hierarchy bargain from positions of strength; where neither the faction nor the apex wants to wreck the arrangement, a concession gets made; the concession outlives the quarrel that produced it and accretes into a standing practice; and over centuries the accumulated residue of other people's fights becomes what a later age calls rights. On that account, anyone below the ruling class who ends up with a protection has usually picked up something that fell out of a fight he was not in.

Tokugawa Japan is a hard test of that account, because the fights it predicts mostly did not happen — and a lever appeared anyway.

The formal position: foreclosure, nearly complete

Set out what did not exist, because the list is long and it is not a rhetorical device.

There was no representative body of any kind, at any level, for any class. There was no charter, no coronation oath, no fundamental law that bound the ruler. There was no right of assembly; combining across domain boundaries was precisely what the founding legislation had criminalised. There was no free press: writing about the ruling house was forbidden in print *and in manuscript*, and the trade that might have contested this had been bought with a monopoly. There was no protection from arrest and no known law — the penal code was secret by its own terms, visible to a handful of magistrates. Status was hereditary and legally fixed. There was no examination, no purchase of office, no ennoblement, no lawful route from commoner to warrior. And

there was no exit: no departure from the country on pain of death, and no existence outside the register at home.

Judged on its constitutional documents, this is the most completely foreclosed order in the collection. Which makes what follows more interesting rather than less.

The lever that worked

From the middle of the eighteenth century, in the most commercially advanced part of Japan, something appeared that has no equivalent elsewhere in this study.

The *kokuso* was a lawful, wide-area petitioning campaign of the middle and later Tokugawa period. Peasants engaged in small commodity production, seeking to break the distribution monopolies of the privileged urban merchants and to sell their goods freely, or to buy at reasonable prices the fertiliser their commercial cultivation required, combined across the boundaries of their lords' jurisdictions in very large numbers of villages and petitioned, lawfully and repeatedly. In the home provinces, where commercial production was most developed, such campaigns ran from 1740 onward over rapeseed, oil, cotton and purchased fertiliser.

The scale is the point, and so is the arithmetic of how it grew. In 1823 the villages of Settsu and Kawachi moved against the three-place raw-cotton wholesalers of Osaka. The campaign began with 786 villages; a further 221 joined; the total reached 1,007 — about seventy per cent of the villages of the two provinces, and the first time the number had passed a thousand. The result was that a guild the shogunate itself had chartered was abolished. The following year 1,460 villages of Settsu, Kawachi and Izumi petitioned on rapeseed, and campaigns of a thousand or more villages were mounted again in 1855 and in 1865. Nor was the practice confined to the Kinai: around Edo, 1,016 villages combined in 1789 and 283 in 1843 to demand reductions in the price of night soil, and in 1813 more than a hundred villages of Tōtōmi and Suruga acted against monopoly buying of tea. In 1838 sixteen districts of Kawachi petitioned for the abolition of the rural oil-pressers' guild.

Two features distinguish this from anything else in the study. The first is stated flatly in the Japanese scholarship: unlike an uprising, it involved no sacrifice of life; it was by lawful petition, found in no other region, that these communities pressed against the structures of the feudal order. Compare the direct appeal over a lord's head, where the petition was granted and the petitioner crucified. Here the instrument was legal, the participants were not punished, and it won.

The second is that the villages learned how to use it, and the record shows them reasoning about it. Their claims were sometimes allowed and sometimes dismissed; but by repeating the campaigns they acquired the capacity to mount petitions on a very

large scale, and they came to understand that the shogunate would not listen unless the number of participating villages was large. Accordingly they took up the rapeseed question alongside the cotton question, so that more villages would have a reason to join.

That is a documented strategy: identify the threshold of numbers at which authority is obliged to respond, then broaden the grievance in order to reach it.

Where the lever came from

Now the provenance test, because a lever that works needs an explanation and "the peasants demanded it" is not one.

The wholesalers' monopoly the villages destroyed was not a private abuse. The guild's exclusive right rested on the shogunate's own policy of tightening control over the production and distribution of the home provinces' commercial products; it was a privilege guaranteed by the shogunate, so effective that merchants from other provinces stopped coming to the villages of Settsu and Kawachi at all, and the growers' selling routes narrowed until they were at the mercy of the three-place wholesalers' collection network. The wholesalers, once the guild was chartered, made much of the licence silver they paid to the shogunate, and used it to extend a privilege granted only for the city into control of the villages' cotton distribution as well.

So the villages were standing in a crack that ran through the government itself. The shogunate wanted licence revenue from chartered guilds; it also wanted goods flowing into Osaka and Edo and prices not rising, because rising prices in the cities were the standing political emergency of the later period and the thing every reforming administration was appointed to fix. Those two objectives were in direct conflict, and the conflict was internal to the apex.

The petitioning villages did not receive a concession from a faction that had taken up their cause. **They identified a contradiction between two things the government wanted, organised at a scale that forced the government to choose between them, and were on the winning side of the choice.** No patron, no sponsor, nobody inside the hierarchy fighting on their behalf. That is a variant of the residue mechanism the corpus carries, and it is worth naming as its own, because it does not require the excluded to have a friend at court — only a real contradiction to exploit and the organisational capacity to reach the threshold at which the contradiction has to be resolved.

And the origin of that organisational capacity is the sting. The village was a corporate body with officers, records, internal decision procedures and long experience of dealing with authority as a unit — because the settlement had made it one, for fiscal

reasons, two centuries earlier. Assessment was issued to the village, allocation was done by the village, liability was collective, the register was kept by the headman. The order had manufactured thirty thousand small corporations in order to collect tax through them without meeting anybody. **Corporate liability imposed for extraction is the same instrument as corporate standing available for petition**, and an order cannot install the first without eventually possessing the second.

The privilege that was destroyed and had to be given back

The other side of the same fight produces the study's cleanest demonstration of what makes a paper liberty real.

The chartered guilds were a genuine property right — an enforceable, transferable, defensible privilege in a licence, held by commoners, recognised by the state. In 1841 a reforming administration destroyed them. Holding that the guilds' monopoly rights were the cause of rising prices, the shogunate dissolved the ten-group wholesalers of Edo in 1841 and extended the measure to merchants and artisans throughout the country the following March; licence payments and free deliveries were remitted, but trading monopolies were abolished, and forming new associations or calling oneself a wholesaler was itself prohibited, direct dealing by non-specialists being encouraged instead. The reasoning was that if entry to the trades were freed, goods would flow into Edo and prices fall, and the argument had respectable intellectual backing in the political economy of the period.

It failed comprehensively. The dissolution threw commerce into great confusion; the credit maintenance and transaction coordination the guilds had performed were lost, dealing became unstable, price control impossible, and business worsened. And then the reversal, in the restoring instrument's own words: the edict of 1851 recites that since the dissolution the methods of trade have collapsed, that prices have not come down, and that on the contrary commerce is reported to have become obstructed — and on that account the guilds are to be revived.

The factional route is exactly as the residue model predicts. Mizuno Tadakuni fell; in 1846 Tsutsui Masanori proposed the restoration to Abe Masahiro; and in 1851 Abe directed Tōyama Kagemoto to carry it out, as wholesalers' associations without licence payments. The restored form was not the old one: no share certificates were issued and there was no limit on membership, and the numbers were deliberately increased in order to draw in the newer merchants.

Read what accreted. A monopoly was destroyed and did not come back. The *right to associate for trade* was destroyed, found to be indispensable, and came back — in a weaker and broader form, open to entrants the old guild had excluded. That is residue

in its purest observable state: nobody intended the outcome, two factions fought over an unrelated question, and what survived the fight was the part the order had discovered it could not do without.

The general proposition follows, and it is the answer to the question of what makes a liberty more than words: **a privilege becomes a right at the moment the apex discovers that it cannot function without the activity the privilege protects.** Not when it is written down, not when it is proclaimed, and not when it is believed — when its removal is tried and has to be undone. Which gives a study something specific to look for in any order: a privilege withdrawn and then restored, and the restoring instrument, which will generally state the reason.

The way in, and its price

That leaves the question of admission, and here the answer is the sharpest single fact in the module.

There was no lawful ladder. There was a market.

The standing and office of a shogunal houseman, with the stipend attached, became in effect a form of property and an object of sale. Because the lowest of the three grades was a single-lifetime engagement which could not be inherited — the successor being taken on formally as a new appointment — the sons of townsmen and peasants could go through the forms of adoption and buy the position for money. From the middle of the period, as the housemen fell into poverty, this became general, and market prices established themselves: a thousand ryō for a mounted officer of the town magistracy, two hundred for a constable, five hundred for a foot-guard. In time even the positions of hereditary housemen and of the lower bannermen came to be bought and sold. The practice was concentrated among the housemen, and its existence is evident from the fact that the shogunate issued prohibitions against it repeatedly.

Repeated prohibition is the proof of persistence, and the price list is the proof of routine. So the order that had abolished movement between statuses by law spent its later century selling entry to the warrior class at posted rates.

What that does to an order is not to open it. It changes what admission selects for. A ladder of examination selects for whatever the examination measures; a ladder of patronage selects for connection; a ladder priced in gold selects for gold. The men who bought in were the rich — prosperous merchants and substantial village families — and what they were buying was standing, not employment. The able and poor could not use it. **Where an order forecloses the ladder, the ladder reappears as a market, and a market ladder recruits money rather than ability** — which is precisely why the capable and poor of the warrior class found their opening not in Edo, where

advancement had a price they could not pay, but in the reforming domains, where a bankrupt treasury had made competence briefly worth more than birth.

What made the working levers work

Three conditions distinguish the levers in this order that had force from the ones that were words.

They were collective and lawful. A thousand villages petitioning is an administrative fact a magistrate must dispose of; one man petitioning is a man who can be crucified, and was. The whole difference between the *kokuso* and the direct appeal lies here, and the villages understood it precisely.

They served some part of the apex. Every lever that worked was on one side of a genuine division inside the government — guild revenue against urban prices, monopoly against supply, the cost of a concession against the cost of a disturbance. None of them asked the order to act against its own interests; each offered the order a way of choosing between two of its interests.

They were cheap to concede. Abolishing a cotton guild costs the shogunate a licence fee. It does not cost it the settlement, the floor, the register or the status law. An order will concede what does not touch its structure and will concede it repeatedly, and that is where residue accumulates — never at the load-bearing points.

And the corollary that keeps this honest: every one of these was revocable, and one of them was revoked. Nothing described here was a right in the sense of a claim the state was bound to honour. Each was a standing practice that the apex found convenient, sustained by the apex's continuing interest and by the petitioners' capacity to organise. That is what liberty was in this order — not a guarantee, but a reliable habit, which is a great deal more than nothing and a great deal less than a charter.

What was never available to anyone

The list from the opening of this module stands. Nothing here touched speech about the ruling house, assembly across domains for any purpose but petition, knowledge of the criminal law, protection from arrest, or the ability to leave.

And one population had none of the levers at all. The outcaste categories were corporate bodies too, registered and organised, and they could not use the mechanism the villages used, because the *kokuso* worked by aligning a grievance with an interest of the apex, and there was no interest of the apex that their advancement served. That is the clearest evidence available that the mechanism described here is not a form of

justice slowly asserting itself. It is a market in convergent interests, and those with nothing to offer got nothing.

Reading plurality against the framework

Four returns.

First, an addition to the residue mechanism: a counter-lever can be found rather than granted, and the finding can be done from below without a patron. The corpus's account has liberties falling out of quarrels among the powerful, with those below picking up what drops. This case shows a step more. The villages of Settsu and Kawachi had no faction fighting for them and received no concession from anyone. They located a contradiction between two objectives the shogunate genuinely held — revenue from chartered monopolies, and cheap goods flowing to the cities — and organised at a scale that compelled the government to resolve it. The proposition to carry: **even a fully foreclosed order contains contradictions between its own aims, and a group with organisational capacity but no standing can convert such a contradiction into a usable lever.** The binding requirement is capacity, not sympathy.

Second, and it is the same finding turned over: the capacity is usually something the order built for its own purposes. These villages could act because the settlement had made them corporate persons — with officers, seals, records, procedures and two centuries of practice in dealing with authority as bodies — in order to assess and collect tax through them. **An order that governs through corporate intermediaries has, by that decision, created the only political actors below the elite that it will ever face.** It cannot have collective liability without eventually having collective standing, and a study should look for the petition wherever it finds the joint assessment.

Third, the test of whether a liberty is more than words: try removing it. The chartered guilds were abolished in 1841 and restored in 1851 because the order discovered it could not run without them, and the restoring edict says so in its own language — trade collapsed, prices did not fall, commerce was obstructed. **A privilege becomes a right at the moment the apex finds it cannot function without the activity the privilege protects**, and the diagnostic for any case is to search the record for a withdrawal that had to be reversed and then read the reversing instrument. Note also what the reversal preserved and what it did not: the monopoly stayed dead, the association came back weaker and open to newcomers. Residue is not the restoration of the old thing. It is the part of the old thing the order turned out to need.

Fourth, a foreclosed ladder does not stop advancement; it reprices it. The Tokugawa order abolished status mobility in law and then sold houseman positions at a

thousand *ryō* for a mounted officer, five hundred for a foot-guard, two hundred for a constable, prohibiting the practice repeatedly and failing to stop it. **Where a study finds an order with no formal route from below, it should look for the price**, and should expect to find that the informal route selects for wealth. The consequence for this case is direct and it links to the fracture: the shogunate's own service was open to the rich and closed to the able, so the able went to the domains — and the domains, a generation later, brought them to Edo with the guns.

A note on sources. This module rests on Japanese reference scholarship, local-archive publications and one primary phrase, paraphrased except where quoted. The *kokuso* material — the definition as a lawful wide-area petitioning movement of the middle and later period, its origin in the home provinces from 1740 over rapeseed, oil, cotton and purchased fertiliser, the combination of villages across jurisdictional boundaries, the 1823 campaign of 786 villages growing to 1,007, the abolition of the three-place raw-cotton wholesalers' guild, the 1824 campaign of 1,460 villages on rapeseed, the further campaigns of over a thousand villages in 1855 and 1865, the Edo-area campaigns of 1,016 villages in 1789 and 283 in 1843 on night-soil prices, the Tōtōmi and Suruga tea campaign of 1813 and the Kawachi oil-pressers campaign of 1838 — is drawn from the *Nihon daihyakka zensho* entry, the Amagasaki municipal archives' published local history and its associated encyclopaedia, and a Japanese history site's account of the 1823 petition. The observation that the villages learned the numerical threshold at which the shogunate would respond and combined grievances to reach it is the Amagasaki archives' own reading of the sequence. The statement that the guild's privilege rested on the shogunate's policy of controlling home-province commercial products, and that the licence silver paid to the shogunate was used by the wholesalers to extend a city privilege into the countryside, is from the same two sources; the Tondabayashi city history supplies the text of the villages' stated grounds, which are not quoted here.

On the guilds: the dissolution order of the twelfth month of 1841 against the Edo ten-group wholesalers and its extension to merchants and artisans nationally in the third month of 1842, the remission of licence payments alongside the abolition of monopoly and the prohibition on forming new associations, the resulting confusion in distribution and the failure of prices to fall, and the restoration order of the third month of 1851, are from the Yamakawa reference entry and the Japanese Wikipedia articles on the two orders. The quoted recital of the 1851 edict — that trade had collapsed, prices had not come down and commerce had become obstructed — is reproduced in a Shizuoka prefectural library teaching document from a period source, and is given here in that form; the underlying document has not been consulted

directly. The factional sequence of Mizuno's fall, Tsutsui Masanori's proposal to Abe Masahiro in 1846, and Tōyama Kagemoto's execution of the restoration in 1851, together with the deliberate expansion of membership to draw in newer merchants, is from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the guilds. Sources differ on whether Mizuno fell in 1843 or 1845; the dispute concerns the stages of his removal and is not material here, and the module accordingly gives no date for it.

On the sale of positions: the account of houseman standing becoming a form of property, the mechanism by which the single-lifetime grade permitted adoption and purchase, the generalisation of the practice from the middle of the period as the housemen fell into poverty, the market prices of a thousand *ryō* for a mounted officer, two hundred for a constable and five hundred for a foot-guard, and the later extension to hereditary housemen and lower bannermen, are from the Yamakawa *Nihonshi shōjiten* entry, corroborated by a National Diet Library reference response citing the *Kokushi daijiten* and two monographs by Takayanagi Kaneyoshi, which give the same figures. The observation that the shogunate prohibited the practice repeatedly is from a graduate paper on adoption and status among warrior houses in late-period Edo, which also notes the scholarship of Kang Yingyan and Isoda Michifumi on the subject; neither has been read directly here. Modern-currency conversions of these prices circulate in the popular literature and are not reproduced.

The characterisation of the outcaste categories' position at the close is this study's own inference from the mechanism described, not a reported finding, and is offered as an argument. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

Eight Hundred Opinions

Module 10 · Change and Collapse — how an order that could not be overthrown from below was opened from above by its own government, asking two hundred lords and its own retainers what it ought to do; and how a floor that had not been tested since 1638 turned out, when tested with a fifteen-to-one advantage, not to be there

The proposition brought to this module is disenchanting and nearly mechanical. A functioning order is an armed settlement, and an armed settlement can be altered only by those who command organised force. The people below it — the peasant, the outcaste, the tenant, the girl sold into service — do not command organised force, and unorganised bodies lose to organised violence with a regularity that approaches a law. So structural change never originates with them. It comes when the floor of force itself cracks, and it cracks in four ways: the elite fractures and one faction arms the population against the other; the elite exhausts itself and can no longer project force; a rival elite conquers it; or it breeds more claimants than it can seat until the surplus turns against it. The common man is present at every opening — as soldier, as crowd, as the weight a broken faction swings — but never as its author.

Tokugawa Japan is an unusually clean place to test this, because the pressure from below was real, sustained, and completely ineffectual for two hundred and fifty years, and because the pressure from within was building the whole time in ways the preceding modules have already documented. The warrior class was impoverished by a stipend fixed in a commodity whose price it did not set. The peasantry was quietly enriching itself against an assessment nobody had re-measured. The surplus of the surplus went to merchants the order had ranked last and periodically expropriated. The order bred far more warrior sons than it had stipends and had closed every external outlet. And the domains squeezed hardest by the shogunate's own disciplinary levies had been forced, to survive, to build the only competent governments in the country and to staff them from below.

All of that was in place before a single foreign ship mattered. What arrived in 1853 did not create any of it. It removed the last condition under which it could all remain unresolved.

What arrived, and why the order could not see it coming

Four American warships anchored off Uraga in the sixth month of 1853 carrying a letter from the President of the United States demanding a treaty and the opening of the country.

The shogunate had been warned. Its classified annual reports from the Dutch had described the trajectory of European power in Asia for decades; the Dutch king had sent a letter in 1844 advising Japan to open, and the shogunate had refused to receive it. The men in Japan best equipped to interpret what was coming had made the attempt in 1839 and had been imprisoned, confined and destroyed, at the instigation of an official pursuing a factional quarrel. The information system described earlier in this study did exactly what its structure predicted: it monopolised the foreign picture at the apex, punished the only people positioned to correct it, and thereby guaranteed that when the thing arrived the government would be alone with its own error.

Japan had no prospect of winning a war with the United States, and the senior councillor knew it.

The first cut, made by the apex itself

What Abe Masahiro then did is the single most consequential act in the collapse, and it was entirely voluntary.

Immediately after Perry's arrival, the senior councillor reported the visit and the American president's letter to the imperial court, and — breaking precedent — required the daimyō and the shogunal retainers to submit their opinions on how the letter should be answered. He broke the shogunate's habitual secrecy and circulated the content of the letter to the court, to the daimyō including the outside lords, and further still. Some eight hundred opinion papers came back from across the country, and no effective solution was found among them.

The consequence is stated in the Japanese textbook treatment with a precision this study cannot improve on: the shogunate sought to meet the crisis in concert with the court and the daimyō, but this measure drew the court out into the arena of actual politics and raised its authority, and gave the daimyō an opportunity to speak on the government of the realm — becoming the occasion for the transformation of the shogunate's autocratic mode of political operation. Another account puts it more bluntly: under the shogunate's own doctrine, foreign relations and the government of the realm were matters the shogunate decided. To ask the daimyō their opinion was to admit that the shogunate could not decide alone. The monopoly began to break here.

Read against the previous module, this is astonishing. Every element of the foreclosure catalogued there — no assembly, no consultative body, no daimyō voice in government, no court in politics, no publication of state business — was undone in a single administrative decision, by the government itself, in the space of a few weeks, with nobody demanding it.

And the position logic behind it is not mysterious. Abe had no navy, no money, no means of resistance, and a legitimating warrant that ran through Kyoto. He faced a decision that would be hated whichever way it went. Consulting was the cheapest available method of distributing the blame for a humiliation he could not avoid. It was, in the narrow sense, a competent move.

It was also irreversible. **Consultation converts an exclusive right into a shared one, and the shared one is never handed back.** From 1853 the outside lords had standing to speak on national policy, and the court had a role in it, and neither ever surrendered the position again.

The same administration reopened, in a rush, the channels the order had spent two centuries narrowing: the ban on building large ships, written into the founding laws for the military houses, was lifted; batteries were thrown up; a naval training establishment was created at Nagasaki to learn the handling of Western warships; and an institute for Western studies was set up in Edo to teach and translate — the same institute that would become the country's first university. The government that had imprisoned its Dutch scholars in 1839 was founding a school for them in 1856.

The second cut: the warrant refused

The treaty of 1854 opened ports. The commercial treaty pressed by the American consul in 1858 was a far larger matter, and the shogunate — having established five years earlier that such questions went to Kyoto — asked for imperial sanction.

It was refused. The emperor Kōmei would not approve, and Ii Naosuke signed without him.

This is the bill for a decision made in 1603 arriving with interest. For two and a half centuries the imperial warrant had been the perfect instrument described earlier in this study: unconditional, irrevocable, and impossible to lose, because its founding code had deliberately declined to make it conditional on anything. It was also, for all that time, never actually tested, because no shogun had ever needed a sanction the court might withhold. The moment one did, the structure revealed its other face. An authority that cannot be taken away can still be *withheld* — and the shogunate had spent two hundred and fifty years teaching every literate person in Japan that its own right to govern came from that source.

What followed ran on its own logic. Ii purged the opposition, executing and confining men of the court, the domains and the reforming faction; and in 1860 he was cut down outside the castle gate. From that point the question of who spoke for the realm was open, and the doctrine that answered it — that the imperial line was the true sovereignty and the warrior governments an interposition — had been developing in print, unmolested, for a century, because the shogunate could never suppress it without impeaching its own commission.

The third cut: every ledger repriced at once

Then the money went.

In Japan the exchange ratio of gold to silver stood at about one to five; abroad it stood at about one to fifteen. A foreigner bringing silver into Japan could obtain roughly three times the gold he could buy at home. The treaties' currency clauses required like coin to be exchanged for like by weight, which opened a road for speculation, and from the opening of the ports in the sixth month of 1859 gold left the country in quantity.

The remedy was worse than the disease. In the intercalary third month of 1860 the shogunate carried out a recoinage aimed at correcting the gold–silver ratio by reducing the fineness of the gold coin, and the outflow stopped. The gold content was cut to about a third. Holders of old coin, which was to be revalued at up to three times face in the new, mobbed the money-changers in Edo in scenes of great confusion; this meant violent inflation, and prices, fluctuating wildly, rose steeply. The gold content of the coin that came to dominate circulation had fallen to about one-eleventh of that of the coinage of 1601. The stock of gold coin rose by 2.8 times in 1860 alone.

At the same time the distribution machinery described earlier in this study came apart from the other end. Rural merchants shipped goods directly to the treaty ports without passing through the wholesalers, so the privileged distribution structure centred on the wholesale merchants of Edo and the other great cities progressively collapsed; and because production could not keep pace with rapidly increasing exports, prices rose sharply.

Every ledger this study has priced was repriced inside eighteen months. The warrior on a fixed rice stipend, already impoverished by two centuries of arithmetic, was ruined by an inflation that arrived in two years. The urban commoner, the best-placed man below a warrior, found his food costing multiples of what it had. And the villages whose lawful petitions had for a century been aimed at breaking the wholesalers found the wholesalers collapsing on their own — into an economy nobody controlled.

The proof of exhaustion

The floor had not been tested at scale since 1638. It was tested in 1866, and the test is unambiguous.

The shogunate mobilised the domains against Chōshū: about a hundred and fifty thousand men against about ten thousand. Satsuma refused to send troops, having concluded its alliance with Chōshū that January; the attack on Hagi was cancelled because of that refusal. Hiroshima likewise refused, and morale in the shogunal army was low. Chōshū's forces under Ōmura Masujirō inflicted a heavy defeat at the Iwami approach, taking Hamada Castle and the Iwami silver mine. Chōshū had put the whole domain on a war footing, employing its irregular units and its peasant and merchant soldiers, and met the shogunal army with modern weapons brought in by smuggling. The fighting on the Aki approach went back and forth, but at the Iwami and Kokura approaches the Chōshū forces overwhelmed the shogunate's. Moreover the shogunal army's rear was threatened by smashings in Osaka and Edo and by peasant risings — the rise in prices and the increase in the people's burdens had been the tendency ever since the opening of the ports, and the second expedition accelerated it, sharpening the social contradictions further. The shogunate's defeat was thereby settled. The fourteenth shogun died at Osaka Castle; his successor announced he would take the field himself and withdrew the announcement on news that Kokura Castle had fallen; and a truce was arranged through the court. At Kokura the fighting continued, because the shogunate no longer had the power to stop it.

Fifteen to one, and it lost — because half the coalition would not march. That is what exhaustion looks like when it is finally visible. The floor had not disappeared in 1866; it had been going since the day a domain discovered that its own bankruptcy required it to become competent, and since the day the shogunate discovered it could not pay its own retainers without expropriating their creditors. 1866 is only the year everybody could see it.

What followed took eighteen months: the surrender of the governing commission to the court in the tenth month of 1867, the fighting of 1868–69, and the end.

The common man, honestly

He appears three times in this account and it is worth being exact about each, because the honest version of the thesis is stronger than the crude one.

He appears as the smashers in Osaka and Edo and the risings in the countryside which, on the standard account, threatened the rear of the shogunal army in 1866 and helped settle its defeat. He appears as the soldier: Chōshū's mixed irregular units, in

which peasants and merchants carried modern rifles — armed, that is, by one faction of the warrior elite for use against another, which is precisely the pattern the corpus predicts. And he appears, throughout, as the constant background pressure of a population being ground by an inflation nobody had chosen.

In none of these is he the author. Nobody consulted him; no rising of his took a castle; the men who ended the shogunate were warriors, and the men who replaced it were warriors of the same generation and mostly of the same lower ranks. But the concession the thesis owes is real and this case makes it plainly: the price rises and the disturbances were a genuine cause of the shogunate's defeat in 1866, because they made a second campaign unaffordable and a third unthinkable. The distinction to hold is between the proximate agent and the causal load. He carried load. He did not act.

And the surest evidence for the thesis is the negative one. The peasantry of Japan had been petitioning, smashing and rising for two hundred years, at times in enormous numbers — a thousand villages at once — and had never once altered the structure of the settlement. What altered it was two domains and a court.

Which crack was it

Conquest by a rival elite: no, and the point is important. Nobody invaded Japan. The Western powers supplied the shock, the humiliation, the weapons and the terms of trade, and imposed no government. This is not 1945. The order that replaced the shogunate was made by Japanese out of Japanese materials, which is why the study that follows this one is about their position and not about anyone else's.

Exhaustion: yes, but in a form the corpus does not yet carry. The framework has exhaustion as great-power war shattering the floor and forcing the survivors to pay the men who fought. Japan fought no great power. It was exhausted by the *terms of contact* — a specie ratio written into a treaty by parties who understood arbitrage better than the men signing, a forced recoinage, an inflation, and the collapse of a distribution system that had been the order's fiscal machinery. The floor was destroyed without a battle against the party that destroyed it.

Overproduction: yes, chronic, and it supplied the personnel. A hereditary warrior class breeding more sons than stipends, forbidden by law to take up other work, with the country sealed and the shogunate's own ladder available only for cash at a thousand *ryō* a place. That surplus is where every name in the Restoration comes from.

Fracture: yes, and it is the proximate crack. But the fracture was not forced open by a rival faction. **It was opened by the apex, on its own initiative, in the eighth**

week of the crisis, by asking two hundred lords and eight hundred correspondents what it ought to do.

Reading the collapse against the framework

Four returns.

First, an apex can open its own fracture, and will do so when sharing a decision is cheaper than owning it. This is the module's principal contribution and it is not in the corpus's four cracks. Abe Masahiro was not defeated, not deposed, and not compelled; he faced a decision that would be resented whichever way it fell, and he distributed it. The framework should carry the diagnostic: **look for the moment an autocratic centre asks for advice it has never asked for before.** It will be described in the sources as a reform, a broadening, a turn to public opinion; structurally it is a transfer of standing from a body that held a monopoly to bodies that did not, and it is not recoverable, because the only way to withdraw a consultative right is to demonstrate the power one has just admitted lacking.

Second, a rented warrant can be refused, and the refusal falls due exactly when the renter first needs something he has never needed. The imperial sanction had been safe for two and a half centuries because nobody had asked for anything the court might decline. In 1858 the shogunate asked, and was refused, and had no answer — because its own title ran through the institution refusing it, and it had spent two hundred and fifty years making sure everybody knew that. **The characteristic danger of a borrowed legitimacy is not that the lender will revolt; it is that the borrower will one day require an act rather than a formality.**

Third, an order can be exhausted by contact rather than by combat. Add the variant to the exhaustion crack. Where an order is opened to a world market on terms set by others, and where the terms touch the medium in which all its internal obligations are denominated, every ledger in the settlement is repriced simultaneously, and the classes whose incomes are nominally fixed are destroyed in years rather than generations. No army need be defeated for this to break a floor. **The diagnostic is the currency clause**, and a study should read the monetary provisions of a treaty of contact before it reads the political ones.

Fourth, and the summary this study has been building toward: the trigger was external and every mechanism was internal. The warrior class impoverished by a stipend nobody re-measured. The great domains modernised by a disciplinary levy meant to keep them weak. The experts destroyed in a factional purge, leaving the government alone with its error. The doctrine of imperial primacy left unsuppressed because the shogunate's own commission ran through the throne. The money in the

hands of a class the settlement had ranked last and robbed three times. The ladder into the ruling class closed to ability and open at a posted price. **Every one of those was produced by an instrument the order installed for a good reason, and every one had been visible for decades.** The ships did not cause the collapse. They removed the last condition under which the contradictions could go on not being resolved — and the men who then resolved them were, exactly as the framework predicts, not the people who had suffered most under the arrangement, but the armed sons of the class that had run it.

A note on sources. This module rests on Japanese reference scholarship and institutional sources, paraphrased. Abe Masahiro's consultation — the report to the court, the breaking of precedent in requiring opinions from the daimyō and shogunal retainers on the American letter, the wider circulation including the outside lords, and the consequence that the measure drew the court into practical politics, raised its authority, gave the daimyō an opening to speak on national government, and transformed the shogunate's autocratic operation — is from the *Sekai no rekishi mappu* summary of the standard textbook account, corroborated by a *Serai* biographical article and a bakumatsu-history site. The figure of about eight hundred opinion papers is from the latter and is widely repeated; it has not been traced to a documentary count and should be treated as the received figure. The claim that opinions were solicited from commoners as well appears in two of these sources and not in the textbook account, and is accordingly not relied on here. The lifting of the ban on large ships, the batteries, the Nagasaki naval training establishment and the Edo institute for Western studies are from the same textbook summary.

The refusal of imperial sanction in 1858, Ii Naosuke's signature without it, the Ansei purge and his assassination in 1860 are given here from the standard chronology without specific citation, having not been separately verified for this module; a reader building on the sequence should confirm the dates and the terms of the refusal directly. The same caution applies to the surrender of the governing commission in the tenth month of 1867 and to the campaigns of 1868–69, which are stated here only as the terminal sequence.

On the currency crisis: the domestic gold–silver ratio of about one to five against about one to fifteen abroad, and the mechanism by which foreign silver purchased Japanese gold at roughly a third of the world price, are from the Bank of Japan Currency Museum's exhibition materials and a Japanese educational reference. The treaty currency clause's opening of a road for speculation, and the recoinage of the intercalary third month of 1860 reducing the fineness of the gold coin and halting the outflow, are from a regional financial-history journal article. The reduction of gold

content to about a third, the revaluation of old coin at up to three times face, the crowds at the money-changers, the violent inflation, and the final gold content of about one-eleventh of the 1601 coinage are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on the late-period currency problem and a teaching site. The figure of a 2.8-fold increase in the stock of gold coin in 1860 is from a Bank of Japan Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies paper by Fujii Noriko, which also notes that general prices rose by only about forty per cent over the same two years — a discrepancy between money stock and prices that this module does not attempt to resolve and that a reader should be aware of before treating the inflation as immediate. The collapse of the wholesale distribution structure through direct shipment by rural merchants to the treaty ports, and the price rise caused by exports outrunning production, are from the *Sekai no rekishi mappu* textbook summary.

On the campaign of 1866: the force ratio of about a hundred and fifty thousand to about ten thousand, Satsuma's refusal to send troops following the alliance of the first month, the consequent cancellation of the Hagi approach, Hiroshima's refusal, the low morale of the shogunal army, the defeat at the Iwami approach under Ōmura Masujirō with the loss of Hamada Castle and the Iwami silver mine, the death of the fourteenth shogun at Osaka Castle, the withdrawn announcement of a personal campaign on news of Kokura's fall, the truce arranged through the court, and the continuation of fighting at Kokura because the shogunate lacked the power to stop it, are from a book-review site's account, a museum reference site, and the *Sekai daihyakka jiten* entry on the Chōshū expeditions reproduced by JapanKnowledge. The last of these supplies the material on the whole-domain war footing, the irregular units and peasant and merchant soldiers, the smuggled modern weapons, and — the point this module leans on most — the threat to the shogunal army's rear from smashings in Osaka and Edo and from peasant risings, attributed there to the price rises and increased burdens since the opening of the ports. The figures for the four approaches given in the museum source (twenty thousand, fifty thousand, fifty thousand, thirty thousand) are reproduced in outline only.

The account of the shogunate's prior warnings — the Dutch reports, the refused letter of 1844, and the destruction of the Dutch-studies scholars in 1839 — rests on material established earlier in this study. The characterisation of the pre-1853 structural pressures likewise draws on the preceding modules rather than on new research, and the causal claim this module makes from them is its own argument, offered for testing. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

They Could Not Taste the Sugar

Module 11 · The Grim Accounting — what the two and a half centuries cost, in the sword and in the metabolic note; an order whose founding violence was modest, whose largest single atrocity was kept off its own books, and whose demographic debt was paid not in famine but in children who were never born

An arrangement made by violence, if it lasts long enough, stops being an arrangement and becomes the way the world is. By 1750 no one alive had seen a battle. The men who had burned Osaka, executed an eight-year-old on a riverbed, pulled down four hundred castles in a week and destroyed the shrine of a deified rival were four generations dead, and what they had built was simply the furniture of Japan — the statuses, the registers, the temples one belonged to, the lord one owed, the roads the processions took.

This study has caught the forgetting in the act three separate times, which is more than most cases yield. The most-quoted instrument of peasant instruction in Japanese history was a provincial text of the 1690s wearing the date of a founding shogun's reign, and it persuaded the villages and the historians alike. The country's most famous policy was named and thereby constituted in 1801 by a private scholar translating a foreigner's essay, and thereafter invoked by shogunal officials as ancestral law. And the founding itself acquired a name — the laying down of arms — bestowed on a settlement whose last act had been to burn a fortress and behead a child.

None of that is hypocrisy. It is what happens to a built thing that takes. But the accounting is the point at which the study stops describing how the order was experienced and asks what it cost.

There are two ledgers. What the sword did, and what the land was made to carry.

The sword: the founding

Sekigahara, the largest field battle in Japanese history, decided in a morning. The winter siege of Osaka. Then Tennōji, in the sixth month of 1615: about eight thousand dead on the winning side and between fifteen thousand and eighteen thousand six hundred on the losing one, out of a defending force of some seventy-one thousand — close to half of it. The castle burned; the heir and his mother dead in the last tower; the eight-year-old grandson beheaded in Kyoto; the pillage and mass rape recorded in the

sources; the rival's tomb levelled and the shrine where he had been worshipped dismantled. Then, twenty-three years later, Shimabara: about twelve thousand rebels and the civilians with them in a dismantled castle against a hundred and twenty-five thousand besiegers, ending with government losses near twenty thousand killed and wounded and between twenty and thirty-eight thousand of the defenders and their families destroyed.

That is the founding bill, and honesty requires saying that by the standards of the century it ended it is small. The Nagashima siege alone, forty years earlier, had burned some twenty thousand people in a single operation; Enryaku-ji, Ishiyama, the Korean campaigns and the Sengoku wars had killed on a scale the Tokugawa founding never approached. **The order that came out of it was cheap by comparison with what it replaced, and that comparison is the strongest thing that can be said in its favour.** It is also exactly what its subjects would have said, and the largest single entry in their benefit column.

The sword: the two and a half centuries

Here the ledger cannot be totalled, and the honest thing is to say so.

Executions ran throughout the period under a penal code its subjects were forbidden to read, with placards set up in the streets naming the criminal, his age and his offence. Crucifixion, burning, beheading and the display of heads were standard penalties. Petitioners who went over their lords' heads were killed, and the story the peasantry told about the most famous of them had him crucified with his wife and his four sons executed. Whole households were destroyed by collective liability. No aggregate count of judicial killing across two and a half centuries has been established in the literature this study has consulted, and none is offered here.

Alongside it stands the violence that produced no corpses and therefore no records. The outcaste categories, formed into their position at birth, marked in residence, occupation and dress, with no exit available at any price and — as the module on liberties established — no access even to the one lever the villages found, because there was no interest of the government their advancement served. The legal traffic in indentured persons, and the sale of daughters into brothel service, which famine reliably increased and which operated lawfully throughout. These are not measurable in deaths and they are the larger part of what the order did to people.

The item that was kept off the books

The single worst thing in this ledger was done not by the shogunate but by a domain, in a place the shogunate did not count, with money that would eventually destroy the shogunate.

Satsuma took the Amami islands from the Ryūkyū kingdom in 1613 and administered them directly, outside its own assessed 770,000 *koku*. Its first act was, on its face, a liberation: finding an existing class of subordinate dependants on the islands, the domain issued regulations freeing them, in order to collect tax from every islander directly and to eliminate the intermediary extraction between itself and the cultivator. Two hundred years later its own extraction recreated that class on a mass scale.

In 1777 the first total-purchase system forbade islanders to sell brown sugar privately and required all of it to be delivered to the domain, which supplied daily necessities in return at sugar-denominated prices far above the market. Those who sold sugar secretly were severely punished, and those who could not meet the levy sold themselves into a servile status — yanchu — and worked off the price of their own bodies, reckoned in sugar. The system was abandoned after about a decade as an evil imposition, and revived in 1830 as the decisive instrument for saving the domain from its financial crisis. Rice cultivation was suppressed and cane acreage forcibly expanded; selling sugar in secret was made a capital offence; leaving the cane stumps cut too high brought heavy punishment; and merely tasting sugar brought a flogging. The circulation of money was prohibited, so that daily necessities could only be obtained by exchanging sugar at rates the domain set unilaterally.

Islanders short of food ate the fruit of the cycad, which is poisonous and had to be leached repeatedly in water, and starch taken from its trunk. Those who could not deliver their assessed sugar fled their villages, borrowed from the rich, or sold themselves; villages were abandoned entirely; and by the end of the period something like two or three tenths of the island population were in that servile condition, the proportion varying by account. In some settlements it reached half. The domain preferred it that way: rather than press each smallholder, it found it more profitable to let the fallen be absorbed by the great cultivators and to expect the increase from their larger operations. More than seventy per cent of the sugar that made Satsuma's profit came from three of these islands, and the financial strength that let the domain rival the shogunate at the Restoration rested on the sugar revenue of the Amami islands, which lay outside its assessed figure.

The islanders' own name for it was the sugar hell.

Now close the circuit this study opened three modules ago. The debt that forced Satsuma to promote a tea attendant's son to chief retainer was incurred largely in

meeting the shogunate's own levies. The reconstruction he carried out rested on this. The reserve it produced bought firearms in quantity, industrial works and a steamship. Those were the arms that beat the shogunal army in 1866 and ended the order. **The regime was destroyed with money extracted from people it did not know it had, in a territory that appeared in none of its registers, by a method it would never have permitted inside them.**

And the loop is grimmer still: the institution of debt bondage that Satsuma abolished in 1613 in order to extract more efficiently was recreated by Satsuma in 1830 for exactly the same reason. Nobody intended a slave system. Two rational administrative decisions two centuries apart produced one.

The metabolic note

The second ledger asks a different question. An advanced order lifts a population above what the land would carry unaided, by coordination and by intensive cultivation — irrigation, terracing, double cropping, fertiliser, a distribution system that moves grain from surplus to deficit. That elevation is a debt. Disturb the coordination and the note is called, and it is paid in famine and epidemic rather than in battle.

Japan under the Tokugawa is a case where the mechanism operated in a form the model does not immediately predict, and the deviation is the module's finding.

The population roughly tripled across the seventeenth century. Estimates for 1600 differ widely — Yoshida's eighteen million, Hayami's twelve million, Saitō's fifteen to sixteen million — but all agree it was in that order and all agree the growth rate of the seventeenth century was far higher than anything after. Then it stopped. The hundred and twenty-five years from 1721 to 1846 were almost entirely stagnant. The shogunate's own count, taken every five or six years from 1721, runs between roughly twenty-five and twenty-seven million throughout — commoners only, the warrior and court populations excluded, so the true totals are perhaps a fifth higher. Individual regions moved sharply in both directions: the north-east and northern Kantō declined, the Hokuriku, Tōsan and Tōkai regions grew, the Kinai declined, and the west and Kyūshū grew — but for the country as a whole, across a hundred and twenty-five years, no great change.

That is a population sitting on its ceiling. And the traditional explanation for how it was held there is exactly the one the metabolic model would supply: famine mortality plus abortion and infanticide. The historical demography has revised it. The stagnation was traditionally interpreted as high mortality from famine caused by crop failure combined with low fertility from abortion and infanticide in peasant households; but as historical-demographic research has advanced it has come to be accepted that a

marked decline in fertility within marriage occurred in the eighteenth-century countryside — so that it was not famine and epidemic alone, but rather the lowering of the potential rate of increase through birth limitation, that was the principal cause.

The note was not called. It was paid in advance, in instalments, by households, in children who were never born. Under an intact and functioning order, with the coordination undisturbed, a population that reached the ceiling of its agriculture did not crash into it; it stopped at it, by a hundred thousand private decisions about marriage age, about spacing, about whether to raise a child already delivered. The cost is real and it is enormous and it is invisible, because it consists entirely of people who did not exist. No chronicle records them. They appear only as a flat line on a graph.

There is a second mechanism, and it is the one this study identified earlier as the order's substitute for a frontier. The cities absorbed the surplus. They were also a demographic sink. Edo in the eleventh month of 1721 held 501,394 people: 323,285 men and 178,109 women. A sex ratio close to two to one, which eased only slowly and had reached about ten to nine by 1843; Edo remained a male-heavy society throughout the period, with many men unable to marry both for want of women and for want of money, a great number living out their lives single.

So the outlet that relieved the pressure on the land was an outlet that did not reproduce. The second and third sons walked to the city, worked, and largely did not have children there. **An internal exit can perform the function of a frontier precisely because it is sterilising** — it removes the person and his descendants at once, which a frontier settlement does not.

Where the note was called locally

The plateau was a national average. Underneath it the note came due repeatedly, in regions, and the pattern of where it came due is itself an indictment.

The Tenmei famine is the largest single entry. The shogunate's own count put the population at 26.01 million in 1780 and 25.09 million in 1786. Famine and epidemic together are held to have caused a fall of over 920,000 in the years from 1780 to 1786, and starvation and disease deaths nationally are put above 900,000. The devastation was worst in Mutsu: in the Hirosaki domain the dead are said to have reached over a hundred thousand, and counting those who fled, close to half the domain's population was lost. Sugita Genpaku reported tens of thousands nationally in his contemporary account, describing people eating the flesh of the dead and human meat mixed with leaves being sold as dog; a domain record speaks of corpses lying like mountains along the roads. But the domains, fearing punishment for misgovernment, suppressed the true scale, and the real figures are thought to be higher than any of these. In the fifth

month of 1787 a thousand rice shops and more than eight thousand merchant houses were attacked in Edo, and the city was without law for three days.

The Tenpō famine, fifty years later, was different in a way that indicts the intervening prosperity. Relief measures had improved and the death toll was lower than in the Tenmei years; but because the commercialisation of cash crops had widened the gap between rich and poor in the countryside, it was the impoverished peasants who starved in numbers. The shogunate opened relief huts at twenty-one places in Edo with capacity for 5,800, and relieved more than 700,000 people. In Osaka, on some accounts, between a hundred and fifty and over two hundred died of starvation every day.

Read that against the module on extraction and the machinery is visible. The famines fell hardest in the north-east — the regions furthest from the commercial economy, whose grain moved toward the price discovered at Osaka because that is precisely what the whole apparatus had been built to make it do. And in the Tenpō years the people who died were the ones the commercial development had left behind. The distribution system that made the order rich was the same system that decided who starved.

The note that was never called

And then the order ended, and nothing happened.

The Boshin fighting of 1868–69 was small by any comparative standard. The villages, the irrigation, the terraces, the cadastral registers, the temple rolls, the roads, the cities and the entire productive apparatus passed intact from one government to the next. The men who took over were warriors of the same generation, mostly of the same lower ranks, who had spent the previous decade running domains and who wanted the machinery to keep working because they intended to use it. Population resumed growing immediately and rapidly.

This is worth stating as a finding rather than an absence. **The metabolic note is called by the disruption of coordination, not by the change of rulers.** An elite substitution that leaves the productive apparatus running discharges nothing, however violent its rhetoric and however complete its constitutional break. What determines whether a transition is paid for in famine is not whether the apex changed but whether the irrigation was maintained, the seed grain survived, and the men who knew how to allocate water were left alive and in place. Here they were. The Tokugawa order is therefore, on the metabolic ledger, an unusual case: two and a half centuries of accumulated elevation, and a change of regime that cost almost nothing to unwind, because nothing was unwound.

Reading the accounting against the framework

Five returns.

First, forgetting is not passive, and this order supplies three worked examples of it being manufactured. A backdated instruction acquiring the authority of the founding generation; a policy invented by a translator in 1801 and thereafter cited by officials as ancestral law; and a founding named for the laying down of arms. **Where a study finds an order describing its own origin, it should date the description.** The manufacture is generally late, generally done by people who need the founders' authority for a present purpose, and generally more effective than anything the founders actually said.

Second, the metabolic debt can be discharged in advance, in fertility, under an order that never breaks — and this is the invisible case. The model expects the note to be called by disruption. Japan shows the other resolution: a population reaching the ceiling of its agriculture under an intact, competent, coordinating order, and stopping there, held by a marked decline in fertility within marriage across the eighteenth-century countryside. No catastrophe, no chronicle, no count. **A flat population line under a functioning order is not stability; it is a debt being serviced, and the payments are made by households in the currency of children not conceived, not raised, or not kept.** A study that looks only for famines will score this order as having paid nothing.

Third, the internal exit that substitutes for a frontier may work because it is sterilising. Edo took the surplus sons at two men to every woman and did not reproduce them. That is why the safety valve identified earlier in this study relieved pressure so effectively for so long, and it should be checked in other cases: **an urban outlet removes a man and his line at once, where a settler frontier removes the man and multiplies the line.** The two are not equivalent instruments and should not be scored alike.

Fourth, the note is called by the disruption of coordination and not by the change of rulers. The proposition to carry, and the diagnostic that follows: when scoring a transition, ask what the succeeding order inherited *intact* — irrigation, registers, seed, storage, the men who ran them. Where those survive, expect no metabolic cost whatever the political violence. Where they do not, expect the deaths to exceed the fighting by an order of magnitude and to arrive one to three years late.

Fifth, and the entry this module most wants recorded: the largest single atrocity in the ledger was kept off the order's own books, and it paid for the order's destruction. Amami lay outside Satsuma's assessed figure, outside the shogunate's registers, outside the accounting of a settlement obsessed with counting. In

it, sugar was made by people forbidden to taste it, who were flogged for tasting it and killed for selling it, who ate poisonous cycad because their rice fields had been turned to cane, and a fifth to a third of whom — half, in some settlements — ended as debt bondsmen. That was the fund that bought the rifles and the steamship. **Where a study finds an order that counts everything, it should look for the territory that is not counted, and expect the worst of the accounting to be there** — because the reason a place is left out of the register is usually that what is done in it could not be done inside one.

A note on sources. The founding casualty figures — Tennōji, Shimabara, and the comparisons with Nagashima and the religious wars — are as established earlier in this study, with the ranges given there and not reopened here. No aggregate figure for judicial executions across the period is offered, because none was found in the literature consulted; the absence is stated rather than estimated.

The Amami material is the least satisfactory in provenance of anything in this study and the reader should know it. The account given here — the annexation of 1613 and the regulations freeing the existing dependants in order to tax islanders directly, the first total-purchase system of 1777 and its abandonment, the revival in 1830 to fund the domain's financial reconstruction, the suppression of rice cultivation and forced expansion of cane, the death penalty for secret sale, punishment for cutting stumps too high and flogging for tasting sugar, the prohibition of money circulation and the exchange of necessities against sugar at rates the domain fixed, the eating of leached cycad, the abandonment of whole villages, the proportion of the island population in servile status given variously as two to three tenths and up to half in some settlements, the domain's preference for letting the fallen be absorbed by large cultivators, and the statement that more than seventy per cent of Satsuma's sugar profit came from three islands and that this revenue underwrote its strength at the Restoration — is drawn from Japanese local-history blogs, a travel-culture magazine, and an essay quoting Nagoshi Mamoru's study of Amami debt bondage. These are secondary and popular sources reporting what is evidently a settled regional scholarship, and they agree with one another closely; but no academic treatment has been consulted directly for this module, and the specific figures, especially the proportions in bondage and the seventy per cent share, should be verified against Nagoshi and the specialist literature before being relied on. The judgement that this constitutes the largest single item in the ledger is this study's own, and it rests on the scale and duration described in those sources.

The demographic material is better founded. The divergent estimates for 1600 (Yoshida's eighteen million, Hayami's twelve million, Saitō's fifteen to sixteen million) and the characterisation of 1721–1846 as almost entirely stagnant are from a Sophia

University working paper on civilisational systems and population. The shogunate's own count, its commoner-only coverage, its five- or six-yearly frequency from 1721, and the range of roughly twenty-five to twenty-seven million are from a Japanese House of Councillors research paper; the regional divergences are from the Japanese Wikipedia article on Edo-period demography, which reproduces Hayami's compiled tables and Kitō Hiroshi's estimates with a uniform twenty per cent uplift for the uncounted. The central claim — that the traditional explanation combining famine mortality with abortion and infanticide has been revised by historical demography in favour of a marked decline in marital fertility as the principal cause of the plateau — is from the Sophia paper and is the one point in this module on which the argument most depends; it is consistent with the broader literature but a reader building on it should go to Hayami, Saitō and Kitō directly, and to Fabian Drixler's work on infanticide in eastern Japan, which has not been consulted here. Edo's population and sex ratio in 1721 (501,394 total, 323,285 men, 178,109 women) are from the House of Councillors paper; the easing to about ten to nine by 1843 and the consequences for marriage are from a popular science site summarising the same demography.

The Tenmei famine figures — the recorded fall from 26.01 million in 1780 to 25.09 million in 1786, the estimate of over 920,000 lost between those years, the figure of over 900,000 starvation and disease deaths, the Hirosaki estimate of over a hundred thousand dead with close to half the domain's population lost including those who fled, Sugita Genpaku's contemporary report and its much lower national figure, the accounts of cannibalism, the observation that the domains concealed the true scale for fear of attainder, and the Edo smashings of the fifth month of 1787 with a thousand rice shops and over eight thousand merchant houses attacked over three days — are from the Japanese Wikipedia article, the *Digital Daijisen* and Heibonsha reference entries, and a Japanese travel-history site. The reference entries differ among themselves (over 900,000 dead in one, a population decline of about 920,000 in another), and the module gives both rather than reconciling them. The Tenpō material — lower mortality owing to better relief, the concentration of deaths among the poor as a result of widened rural inequality, the twenty-one relief huts in Edo with capacity for 5,800 and over 700,000 relieved, and the reported daily starvation deaths in Osaka — is from the Japanese Wikipedia article on that famine.

The concluding argument about the transition of 1868–69 costing nothing metabolically rests on the general record rather than on a source making the claim, and is offered as this study's own inference. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

The Class That Abolished Itself

Module 12 · Convergence and Divergence — what this order shares with every other in the collection, what it did that none of them did and why, and the strongest case that can be made for it, stated at full strength and answered without flinching

The frame held, and it held on a case that shares no continent, creed, script or century with most of the collection.

There was a floor of force, and it was laid in blood between 1600 and 1615 and demonstrated once more in 1638. There was a settlement of who owned what among the armed, written in a specific instrument, and the instrument was reissued at every succession because it was never quite a conveyance. There was a robe, and it was bought — deliberately, expensively, and at a moment when nobody could have compelled the purchase, which is the whole of the revealed-preference argument in one case. There was formation, installed young, and the counter-formation the order withheld was supplied from below within a generation. There was a cost column that came out against revolt for almost everyone, held there by a village that policed itself for nothing. There was extraction, tuned, on a flow, with a legitimating story attached to every mechanism. There was a seam, and an interpreter class, and an episode in which the order destroyed the men who held its most accurate picture of the world.

And above all there was the default. Two hundred and fifty years in which not one lord rebelled, because each man in the hierarchy, in defending his own position, was defending the whole arrangement — and the arrangement fell only when that stopped being true for a group with standing and means. Structural change came, exactly as the collection predicts, from the armed and not from the ruled. The peasantry of Japan petitioned, smashed and rose for two centuries, at times a thousand villages at once, and never once altered the structure. What altered it was two domains, a court, and the shogunate's own decision to ask for advice.

Where it diverges, and why

Almost every divergence in this study traces to one structural fact: **there was no metropole.** The conqueror and the conquered were one society, in one room, speaking one language. There was no sea to hide anything across, no distant public whose belief

funded the operation, no colonial seam split in two by distance, and no frontier to export a surplus to.

From that single absence, the rest follows. The seam ran vertically, by status, rather than horizontally by distance — and the country's foreign information ran instead through four licensed gateways under the centre's own hand, producing an order crowded and plural at home and absolutely captured abroad. The robe, having no distant taxpayer to persuade and no subject population whose belief the floor required, was cut inward, for the coordinating class and the ruling house's own servants: a court rank that let one armed man outrank another without a battle, an ancestor cult that made hereditary vassals into worshippers, a foreign embassy walked past other men's castles. The surplus, having nowhere to go, discharged into the cities, which absorbed it and — being two men to every woman — did not reproduce it. And the settlement, wanting neither the ground nor a land market but the permanent ability to move people, converted possession into office at both ends of the hierarchy rather than into property.

Two further divergences are not consequences of that absence and are worth naming separately. The order never fought a foreign war for two and a half centuries, which meant it never discovered what its military establishment had become — an absence of testing that is itself a form of exposure. And it ended without the productive apparatus being disturbed at all, so that the metabolic note which usually falls due at a transition was never called.

What this case returns to the framework

Twelve modules produced twelve contributions and it would be tedious to restate them. Four are worth carrying forward as general instruments.

A licence can manufacture defenders, and the variable is the counterfactual. The corpus held that what force alone conveys is a revocable permission, that a permission produces no reflexive defence, and that only ownership does. This order was a licence order by every criterion — held at pleasure, reissued at every succession, revoked by the hundred in its first fifty years — and produced the most reliable default in the collection. The amendment: the default a settlement generates is proportional not to the security of the title but to **the gap between the title and the holder's realistic alternative**, and a revocable grant in a country with a living memory of general war outperforms a secure freehold in a country without one.

Divide the payoff. A seventh entry for the Menu, distinct from dividing and balancing: pay capability in office without estate, pay loyalty in estate without office, and take care that no man is ever paid in both. Where dividing and balancing fragments

power among rivals who already exist, this prevents the rivals existing. Its diagnostic tell is a man accepting a loss of revenue to become eligible for a post — which happened here, and which is why the class that ran the government could not conceivably have wanted it to end.

A disciplinary instrument acts as a selection pressure. The alternate-attendance burden was imposed to keep the outer lords weak. It worked, drove the largest of them toward insolvency, and thereby compelled them to promote from below, break their creditors, and run their finances as a professional problem — while the centre, exposed to no such pressure, did none of these things. After two centuries the disciplined were competent and the disciplinarian was not. **Where an apex imposes a chronic, survivable burden on a subordinate elite, ask what that elite had to become in order to bear it.**

An apex can open its own fracture. Not one of the four cracks in the corpus's account of change, and the proximate cause here. In 1853 the shogunate, undefeated and undeposed, facing a decision that would be hated whichever way it fell, asked two hundred lords and eight hundred correspondents what should be done — because sharing the decision was cheaper than owning it. Consultation converts an exclusive right into a shared one, and the shared one is never handed back. **Look for the moment an autocratic centre asks for advice it has never asked for before.**

The counter-position, at full strength

Now the argument this study owes, stated as its best defender would state it and not as a straw figure.

For two hundred and fifty years, in a country of some thirty million people, there was no war. Not a reduced level of war, not a war fought at the periphery, not a peace punctuated by civil conflict — no war. The last general engagement was in 1638 and the next was in 1868. Fifteen generations of ordinary Japanese lived and died without an army crossing their fields, without their harvest being requisitioned by men they could not refuse, without their village being burned in someone else's quarrel, and without their daughters being taken by soldiers. That is a thing almost no population in the seventeenth, eighteenth or nineteenth century anywhere on earth could say, and the century immediately preceding it in Japan had been one of the most continuously violent in recorded history.

Nor was it a peace of stagnation. Population tripled in the first century. New land was brought under cultivation on a vast scale, and techniques, seeds and fertilisers improved continuously. Cities grew to be among the largest in the world, with a commoner culture of theatre, publishing, print and pleasure that the ranked-lowest

classes owned and enjoyed. Village headmen became literate and the skill spread outward. The tax burden, measured against actual output, fell for two centuries. A peasant could not be killed by a passing lord; he had a registered holding his creditors could not lawfully take; his village governed its own affairs and negotiated its own assessment and had that assessment remitted when the harvest failed; and a thousand villages together could compel the government to abolish a monopoly it had itself chartered. Commercial law, futures markets, credit instruments and a national price developed at a level Europe did not match until later. And when the order ended, it ended so cleanly that the productive apparatus of the country passed intact to its successors and the population resumed growing at once.

Judge a political order by what it delivered to the people who actually lived under it, measured against the realistic alternative available to them, and the Tokugawa settlement is among the most successful constructions in the history of government. Its subjects did not overthrow it. They did not leave it. When it fell they had not asked for it to fall and were not consulted about its replacement. And the men who replaced it built a state that, within eighty years, killed more people than the Tokugawa order killed in two hundred and fifty.

That case is strong. Most of it is true. It should not be waved away.

The answer

Concede the peace entirely. It is the largest item in the benefit column of every ledger this study priced, and it was the honest reason the arrangement held. A peasant in 1750 who compared his position with his great-great-grandfather's was right, and no argument in this study says otherwise. Legibility is not pardon, but neither is it denial: an order that ends a century of killing has done the single most valuable thing a government can do, and this one did it and kept doing it for fifteen generations.

Then name the three currencies in which it was paid by people who received none of the benefit.

The outcaste categories, formed into their position at birth, marked in dress and residence and occupation, with no exit at any price — and, as the module on liberties established, without access even to the one lever the villages found, because that lever worked by aligning a grievance with an interest of the apex and there was no interest of the apex their advancement served.

The traffic in persons: indenture that famine reliably increased, and the sale of daughters into brothel service, lawful throughout, and by its nature invisible in every aggregate this study has quoted.

And Amami, which is decisive, because of where it was kept. Sugar made by people who were flogged for tasting it and killed for selling it, whose rice fields were turned to cane, who ate poisonous cycad leached in water, whose villages emptied, and a fifth to a third of whom — half in some settlements — ended in debt bondage. That was done outside Satsuma's assessed figure and outside the shogunate's registers, by an order that counted everything else it had. **A settlement obsessed with enumeration does not fail to count a territory by accident.** The islands were left out because what was done there could not have been done inside a register, and the money made there bought the rifles and the steamship that ended the order. The regime was destroyed by an atrocity it had arranged not to see.

Then take the comparison apart, carefully, because it is doing more work than it can bear. The counter-position's force comes from measuring the order against the Sengoku, and that is the comparison the order chose for itself and taught for two and a half centuries. It is not an illegitimate comparison — the peace really was better than the war, and the people who lived through both said so. But it is not the only comparison, and the honest position is that we do not know what else was available, because nobody was permitted to try. A counterfactual is not an argument, and this study will not manufacture one. What can be said is narrower and harder: an order that has abolished every alternative to itself has also abolished the evidence that would be needed to judge it, and should not then be credited with having been the best available.

And then the answer that matters, which refuses both the celebration and the denunciation. The achievement and the cost are not two things to be weighed against each other. They are the same fact.

The peace was cheap. Three hundred officials policed the largest city on earth; the floor was deployed at scale exactly once in two hundred and thirty years. It was cheap because it never had to be used, and it never had to be used because of what had been done first: the amphibious armed middle dissolved by law so that no rising could be assembled from below the lords; every surplus castle pulled down and every marriage and combination criminalised so that no coalition could be assembled from above; arms attached to birth; status fixed and inheritable; the country sealed; and every person in Japan written into a book kept annually by his own neighbours, outside which he had no legal existence at all. There is no version of the Pax Tokugawa with those things subtracted. **You cannot have the peace without the immobility, because the immobility is the mechanism by which the peace was made cheap.** The order did not achieve tranquillity despite fixing people in place; it achieved tranquillity by fixing them in place, and the fifteen generations who benefited and the fifteen generations who could not move are the same fifteen generations.

That is the finding, and it declines to be comfortable in either direction. It denies the celebration its clean achievement and denies the denunciation its clean atrocity, and it is what the record actually shows.

Finally, the fact about the successor state, which must be stated and must not be used. It is true that the Meiji order and what grew from it killed vastly more people in eighty years than the Tokugawa order killed in two hundred and fifty. It is also true that the Tokugawa order's subjects were not consulted about its ending. Neither fact is an argument for the Tokugawa order, and using them as one would license every arrangement that ever existed, since any order can be defended by the crimes of whatever followed it. The men who built what came next were not weather. They were people in a position, solving the problems in front of them with the materials at hand, inside a field of the visible that had its own edges — which is the subject of another study and not of this one.

What they inherited, and the last fact

Because the materials matter, and this study can hand them over without trespassing on the next.

The Meiji men inherited an intact productive apparatus, a registered and disarmed population accustomed to being counted, a village system that collected tax through corporate bodies, a literate administrative stratum in every village, a commercial economy with credit instruments and a national price, and cities. They inherited a throne whose warrant had been drafted in 701 without a revocation clause and which had just been demonstrated, in 1858, to be the only thing in Japan that could refuse a government. They inherited two domain governments staffed by promotion from below, with modern arms and industrial works, paid for by a sugar monopoly. And they inherited the demonstration that a country could be opened by ships.

And then they did the thing that closes this study. At the return of the registers in 1869 the court nobility and the lords were made peers and their retainers were made shizoku; in 1871 the domains were abolished and the government took over the whole revenue and the whole warrior class, so that stipends and merit-pensions came to 37 per cent of ordinary expenditure. From 1873 those who surrendered their stipends were given a lump sum and bonds, and by the time surrender was closed in 1875 about a third of recipients had been cleared; in 1876 the remainder were issued with bonds and the stipends were abolished entirely. The class in question was about five per cent of the population, and eliminating its stipends was regarded as indispensable to industrial development and military strength. The measures struck the warrior class severely; many were ruined, and their discontent contributed to the risings that

followed. Two months after the commutation came the Shinpūren, Akizuki and Hagi risings, and the following February the Satsuma rebellion — though the historian Ochiai Hiroki cautions against treating the commutation as their principal cause, noting that the rebel elements had been hostile to the government before it, over its subservience to the Western powers abroad and the monopolisation of decision by a few men at home.

Within eight years of taking power, men of the lower warrior class abolished the warrior class, and then put down the risings of their own former comrades.

Set that against this collection's central proposition and it looks at first like a refutation. A settlement is defended by the armed, each man defending his own position; here the armed dissolved their own positions and paid themselves off in paper. But the proposition survives, and survives in the sharpest possible form, because those men were no longer defending the position they had been born into. They had found a better one. The state they now held offered more than any hereditary stipend, and defending *that* position required destroying the old settlement — including their own place in it, and including, when it came to it, the men who would not follow them out.

Which is the whole argument of this collection in a single sequence. Nobody rose. Nobody was liberated. A group with standing and means found that the arrangement no longer paid, found a better arrangement, and dismantled the old one from inside — and the people at the bottom, who had been petitioning and smashing and starving throughout, were told afterwards that a new age had dawned for them, which was in some ways true, and which none of them had brought about.

A note on sources. This module is chiefly synthesis, and every factual claim in its convergence, divergence and counter-position sections rests on material established and sourced in the preceding eleven modules; those sources are not restated here, and the reservations recorded there — particularly the weak provenance of the Amami figures and the single-scholar basis of the domain-grant chronology — carry forward unchanged and apply with equal force to the summary judgements made from them.

The new material is the settlement of the warrior stipends. The sequence — the return of the registers in 1869 with the creation of the peerage and the *shizoku*, the reduction of the domain governors' income to a tenth of the domain assessment, the abolition of the domains in 1871 and the transfer of the whole stipend obligation to the central government, the encouragement of voluntary surrender from 1873 with lump sums and bonds, the clearance of about a third of recipients by the closure of surrender in 1875, the conversion from rice to money stipends in that year, and the final issue of bonds abolishing the stipends in 1876 — is from the Heibonsha and Shōgakukan reference entries and the Japanese Wikipedia article, which agree. The

figure of 37 per cent of ordinary expenditure is given in two of those sources for the period following the abolition of the domains; the same sources note a prior reduction of about 38 per cent in domain stipend payments before 1871, and the two percentages should not be confused. The statement that the class concerned was about five per cent of the population, and the framing of the commutation as indispensable to industrial and military development, are from a Japanese economic-history compilation, which also reports the historian Ochiai Hiroki's caution against treating the commutation as the principal cause of the risings of 1876–77 and notes that Ikai Takaaki takes a similar view; Miyachi Masato is reported there as taking a contrary position. The bond terms are variously given as five to fourteen years' worth of annual stipend and are not stated here with precision. The dates of the risings and of the Satsuma rebellion are standard.

The closing interpretation — that the abolition of the warrior class by men of the warrior class confirms rather than refutes this collection's proposition about who changes settlements — is this study's own argument and is offered for testing rather than as a reported finding. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*